THE HISTORY OF THE CONFEDERATE WAR

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THE HISTORY OF THE CONFEDERATE WAR

ITS CAUSES AND ITS CONDUCT

A NARRATIVE AND CRITICAL HISTORY

BY
GEORGE CARY EGGLESTON

Volume II

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VOLUME II

THE CONDUCT OF THE WAR

(*continued*)

CHAPTER XXXI

The Struggle for Emancipation

In the meantime great events were occurring which were in some respects more important in their bearing on the war than battles would have been. In these events the war recognized itself and adapted itself to its conditions.

From the beginning the abolitionists had clamorously and ceaselessly demanded of Mr. Lincoln that he should recognize the actual cause of the war by proclaiming freedom for the slaves at the South. There was no doubt in anybody's mind that the war was simply the culmination of that "irrepressible conflict" between the systems and sentiments of free and slave labor which had constituted the burden of the country's history for nearly half a century. If there had been no slavery there would have been no war.

It is true that a very large proportion of the Southern people regretted slavery, deprecated its existence, and earnestly desired to be rid of it. It is also true that the great mass of the Southerners were non-slaveholders, and that their fighting was done not for the perpetuation of that institution, in which they had no interest, but in assertion of those reserved rights of the individual states upon the maintenance of which they sincerely believed that the liberty of the people depended. These people desired to take their states

out of the Union, not for the sake of slavery, but for the sake of that right of local self-government which they regarded as the fundamental condition of liberty among men.

On the other hand a large proportion of the Northern people cared little or nothing about slavery—many of them even approving the institution as the only practicable arrangement under which blacks and whites could live peaceably together, and as a condition eminently proper for the incapable black man. But these believed in the maintenance of the Union as a condition of liberty and progress, and were ready to sacrifice their lives and their possessions in behalf of that end.

Nevertheless it was clear from the beginning that in the last analysis, the war involved as its issue the maintenance of slavery, or the destruction of that system root and branch.

Personally Mr. Lincoln hated slavery and very earnestly desired its extermination. But, as he reminded those who beset him with unsolicited advice, he was restrained by his oath of office while they were free to advocate any principle or policy that might seem good in their eyes.

Moreover, he had upon him the tremendous task of preserving the Union and in aid of that supreme purpose he was ready to sacrifice all other considerations of what kind soever. In answer to an impassioned appeal from Horace Greeley in August, 1862, Mr. Lincoln set forth his attitude in these words:

"My paramount object is to save the Union, and not either to save or destroy slavery. If I could save

the Union without freeing any slave, I would do it. If I could save it by freeing all the slaves, I would do it. And if I could do it by freeing some and leaving others alone, I would also do that."

At the beginning Mr. Lincoln had clearly seen the necessity of winning all the support he could to his war measures. He had seen that while practically the whole population of the North would stand by him in a war for the preservation of the Union, there must be a very great and dangerous defection, should he make the war one for the extirpation of slavery in those states in which the institution existed under protection of the Federal Constitution. By thus resolutely refusing to make the war a crusade against slavery, and declaring—as he did in his official utterances—that it was no part of his purpose to interfere with the domestic institutions of any state, Mr. Lincoln had drawn to his support a vast body of influential citizens who would otherwise have opposed, and whose influence was great enough perhaps, if it had been offended, to have robbed him of the means of restoring the disrupted Union. Had he adopted the policy of the extremists at the North, had he begun by declaring war upon slavery rather than upon disunion, there is little doubt that Maryland, Kentucky and the whole strength of Missouri would have been thrown into the Confederate side of the scale with disastrous effect. Even New York, the financially and otherwise dominant Northern state, would have given him at best only a divided and ineffective allegiance, while in all the other states of the North, heavy minorities, and in some cases perhaps commanding

majorities, would have opposed his measures and deprived him of that support in Congress and the country upon which depended his success in his effort to restore and perpetuate the Union.

By his policy of waging war at the outset only for the salvation of the nation's integrity he won to his measures the support of hundreds of thousands whose antagonism, or whose dissatisfied inactivity, would have threatened the National arms with defeat and disaster. So far-reaching indeed was the effect of his wiser policy that it gave to the country in its hour of sorest need the services of the great War Minister, Edwin M. Stanton, with all that his inclusion in the cabinet implied.

Mr. Stanton and Mr. Lincoln were not friends. They were very nearly enemies. Stanton was a Democrat of very pronounced views; Mr. Lincoln represented a party which Stanton had strongly and even bitterly assailed, holding it to be sectional in origin, impulse and purpose, and therefore scarcely less than a treasonable conspiracy against the Nation. But when Mr. Lincoln resolutely formulated his policy, as one that had for its sole object the restoration of the American Union of States and the preservation of the Nation from disruption, Mr. Stanton gladly consented to bear his share in the conduct of affairs with that end in view.

It was a daring thing for Mr. Lincoln to do, thus to place at the head of the War Department when actual war was on, a Democrat whose Democracy was everywhere known to be pronounced and aggressive. Mr. Lincoln foresaw that such an appointment would

inevitably invite hostile criticism and probably active opposition. But Mr. Lincoln was a man of exalted moral courage. He needed the peculiar abilities of Edwin M. Stanton at the head of the War Department at a time when the war seemed almost everywhere to be going against the Union cause, and he needed Stanton's influence in the country. He therefore risked criticism and made the appointment as one that would tend better than any other to marshal the Federal strength into an effective force and perhaps extort victory at the last from a situation which had thus far brought mainly disappointment.

Perhaps the sagacity of the President had still another object in view in the appointment of Stanton. Mr. Lincoln was a shrewd and far-seeing politician. By appointing Stanton, his personal enemy and a distinguished Democrat, to the second most important place among his Constitutional advisers, he did more than in any other way he could have done, to reconcile Northern Democrats to his administration and to make of them earnest supporters instead of active antagonists of his measures for the preservation of the Union.

Mr. Lincoln had several opportunities to emphasize his attitude and purpose. The best of these was furnished by Horace Greeley's article, in reply to which he wrote the passages already quoted in this chapter.

But the matter was made more emphatic in other ways. When McClellan, early in the war, advanced into Western Virginia, that general issued a proclamation to all slaveholders there assuring them that

it was no part of the Government's purpose or policy to interfere with the institution of slavery; that on the contrary the Federal forces would promptly restore to their masters any fugitive slaves who might escape to the Union lines, and that the Federal armies would themselves suppress every attempt at slave insurrection which might be made in the interest of the Union cause. "Notwithstanding all that has been said by the traitors," he wrote, "to induce you to believe our advent among you will be signalized by an interference with your slaves, understand one thing clearly; not only will we abstain from all such interference, but we will, on the contrary, with an iron hand crush any attempt at insurrection on their part."

There is not the smallest doubt that McClellan issued this proclamation with Mr. Lincoln's full approval and even probably by his direction. In any case it reflected the President's attitude and purpose at that time.

At an earlier date, in May, 1861, General B. F. Butler, then commanding at Fortress Monroe, was appealed to for the return of three fugitive slaves who had escaped into his lines. He refused upon a law point of great subtlety. He contended that as negro slaves—chattels of their owners—were capable of being made useful to the Confederates, not only as producers of food for the support of the Southern armies, but also as laborers upon the fortifications and the like, they were properly "contraband of war" precisely as arms and ammunition and foodstuffs are. From that time forward an escaping slave was called a "contraband," and in view of the astonishing lies

told by such "contrabands," and the errors of judgment into which those imaginary bits of information often led the Northern press and people, there was at last a general ridiculing of all statements based upon the testimony of "intelligent contrabands."

Mr. Lincoln did not interfere with General Butler's policy of holding escaped slaves as merchandise "contraband of war." But in other cases he did interfere with the strong hand. In August, 1861, General Fremont, commanding in Missouri, issued a proclamation declaring free the slaves of every Confederate engaged in war against the Union. Mr. Lincoln repudiated the proclamation and himself abrogated its terms.

Seven months later, in March, 1862, Mr. Lincoln gravely asked Congress to adopt a policy of compensated emancipation. The war had already cost about a billion dollars, and it threatened to cost twice or thrice that sum in addition, with an uncertain result as the outcome.

Accordingly, Mr. Lincoln planned to end the struggle by a business-like negotiation. He asked Congress (March 6, 1862), to authorize the Government to lend pecuniary aid to every state which should adopt measures looking to the gradual abolition of slavery. He saw and felt that it would be cheaper for the Government to buy every slave in the land at twice his market value, than to prosecute the war upon the enormously costly scale which it had assumed. Incidentally, also, the making of such an arrangement, if it had been possible to make it, would have saved the lives of hundreds of thousands

of men—the flower of the country's youth on both sides of the line.

It was a business-like and humane thought, and Congress assented to it. But it was based upon the mistaken notion that the Confederates were fighting primarily for their property rights in slaves. It ignored the supremely important fact that the war was costing the Southern people incalculably more than double the value of all the slaves owned in those states. It failed to recognize the equally important fact that, rightly or wrongly, the Southern people sincerely believed themselves to be contending for liberty, for the constitutional rights of the states, for the principle of local self-government; that they were contending against that basilar principle of imperialistic oppression—the government of communities by a power outside of themselves. To Mr. Lincoln's own dictum that "no man is good enough to govern any other man without that other man's consent" they had added the corollary that no community and no nation is good enough to govern any other community without that other's consent. They were fighting, as they confidently believed, for the fundamental principle of self-government among men, and to that cause they were ready to make sacrifice of slavery as cheerfully and as heroically as they were already making sacrifice of all else that they held dear.

Mr. Lincoln misunderstood them and misinterpreted their attitude and their condition of mind. If they had been offered ten thousand dollars apiece for all their slaves—worth on the average only a few hundreds at most—they would have rejected the

offer angrily as a tendered bribe to induce them to give up and betray that cause of human liberty, states' rights, and the right of local self-government, in behalf of which they had taken up arms.

To such men, inspired by such beliefs and engaged in such a cause, no price could offer the smallest temptation. Mr. Lincoln had misunderstood the Southern people, as they had misunderstood him. Their warfare had no element of commercialism or of greed in it, precisely as his was directed not, as they supposed, to the destruction of State autonomy, but to the sole object of restoring and perpetuating the American Union. As fanaticism in antagonism to slavery could not swerve him, so considerations of merely pecuniary advantage did not and could not influence them. His proposal, which was in effect, to buy all the negroes in the South, made no more impression upon the Southern mind than would a proposal to purchase their wives and children, or their right to sign their own names.

It was under this misapprehension of Southern sentiment that Mr. Lincoln for a space rejected every suggestion of negro emancipation and sought to hold his generals in the field to a policy of complete non-interference with slavery in the Southern States.

We have seen in what fashion he dealt with General Fremont's proclamation of emancipation in Missouri. On the twelfth of April, 1862, General David Hunter, in command of the forces on the South Carolina coast, issued a general order to the effect that all slaves within his immediate jurisdiction should be confiscated as contraband of war, and instantly set

free. On the ninth of May he issued another general order in which he declared all negroes resident in South Carolina, Georgia and Florida to be free men.

Ten days later Mr. Lincoln annulled these orders absolutely by executive command, declaring that the question of the emancipation of slaves was one which he reserved to himself, and forbidding all generals in the field to deal with it in any way, direct or indirect.

Congress had legislated on the subject in a very cautious and hesitating fashion. In August, 1861, it had passed an act authorizing military commanders to seize and hold all negro slaves found actually employed in the military service of the Confederacy with the knowledge and consent of their owners. But the act stipulated that slaves so confiscated, should not be set free but should be held subject to the future disposal of the Federal courts.

The proceedings of military officers in the field with respect to this matter varied according to the views and temper of each. Mr. Lincoln's revocation of Fremont's orders led to that General's resignation. General Hunter's act in enlisting a regiment of fugitive slaves who had fled into his lines, gave great alarm in Congress and in the country, lest the war should be diverted from its Union-saving purpose and converted into a crusade for the forcible abolition of slavery, involving all the horrors of a servile insurrection on the part of slaves who, in many parts of the South, were scarcely better than half savages.

General Williams, commanding the Department of the Gulf, sought to solve the difficulty by the simple

process of turning all fugitive slaves out of his camps, thus avoiding the necessity of deciding whether or not he would permit masters to come within his lines for the purpose of recapturing their slaves. Two colonels refused to obey this order, and were promptly removed from their commands in consequence.

Thus the "irrepressible conflict" of sentiment on the subject of property in slaves divided the Federal army and sorely vexed the country as it had done for nearly half a century before.

To Mr. Lincoln it brought perplexities of the gravest sort. It embarrassed him very greatly in his effort to hold the war steadily to the purpose he had marked out for it. It defeated all his hopes of persuading the South to believe that the Government was trying to save or restore the Union, and that the administration was sincere in its declaration of a fixed purpose not to interfere with the institution of slavery in states where it constitutionally existed or to impair in any way the autonomy of those states. Such pledges could make no appeal to the minds of Southern men in face of the actual interferences attempted, often successfully, by commanders in the field.

Worse still, this irreconcilable division of opinion and diversity of action, threatened to deprive the administration of that strong support at the North which Mr. Lincoln deemed necessary to a successful prosecution of the war. It threatened to alienate that great body of men at the North who were implacably opposed to abolitionism and who held firmly to the belief that the autonomy of the States was necessary

to the maintenance of liberty, but who were ready enough to make sacrifice of blood and treasure in aid of a war waged solely for the preservation of the Union.

In this embarrassing situation Mr. Lincoln made a second attempt to cripple Southern resistance by securing emancipation by purchase in the border states, thus cutting off all hope on the part of the South that those states would ever secede, and at the same time in some degree satisfying the clamor of the abolitionists. He called the border-state Congressmen about him and earnestly, even passionately urged them to vote in Congress for an act pledging the Government to pay to every state that should decree emancipation the full value of all the slaves held in such state at the time the census of 1860 was taken. He especially besought these representatives of border slave states to persuade their constituents to a willing acceptance of these terms.

Nothing of any practical value came of this effort. It resulted only in stimulating on the part of the Abolitionists that aggressive insistence upon universal emancipation by military force which was so sorely embarrassing to the President.

It was soon afterwards (August 19, 1862), that Horace Greeley published his open letter entitled "The Prayer of Twenty Millions" to which Mr. Lincoln replied, setting forth his policy and purpose, in words already quoted in this chapter: "My paramount object is to save the Union, and not either to save or destroy slavery. If I could save the Union without freeing any slave, I would do it. If I could

save it by freeing all the slaves, I would do it. And if I could do it by freeing some and leaving others alone, I would also do that."

But all this while Mr. Lincoln contemplated the emancipation of the slaves by executive proclamation as a war measure to be resorted to whenever it should seem to him likely to be effective. In the preceding month of July he had drawn up a proclamation of emancipation, and had read it to his cabinet. But he had laid it aside, believing that the time was not yet ripe. The Confederates seemed at that time at high tide of military success. Their armies, victorious and aggressive, were overthrowing one Federal force after another, and putting Washington itself upon an uncertain defense. It was the conviction both of Mr. Lincoln and of Mr. Seward, that to issue an emancipation proclamation under such circumstances would not only seem ridiculous in the eyes of the world but would be everywhere interpreted as a despairing manifestation of conscious weakness, the futile outcry of failure. He must wait for victories before taking this step.

But when after Antietam, Lee withdrew from Maryland and abandoned his campaign against the national capital, Mr. Lincoln decided to assume the rôle of a victor, dictating terms which he held himself strong enough to enforce.

Accordingly on September 22, 1862, he issued a proclamation declaring that on the first of January, 1863, all slaves held in those states or parts of states which should at that time be still in rebellion should be then and forever afterwards free.

This was at once a threat and a promise.

It is a matter of curious speculation to consider what would have been the situation if the Southern States had submitted themselves before the beginning of 1863. In that event the proclamation of freedom to slaves within their borders would have been of no effect, inasmuch as it applied only to states remaining at war. A second executive proclamation of emancipation would have had no war necessity to justify or even to excuse it. For the Constitution conferred upon the President no power to emancipate slaves. It was only on the plea of war necessity that this power could be remotely and speculatively inferred, and that war necessity would have passed completely away had the war itself come to an end before the date set for the enforcement of the threat.

Perhaps it was in view of this very remote contingency that Mr. Lincoln at that time urged upon Congress the adoption of a constitutional amendment forbidding slavery anywhere within the borders of the Union.

Congress did not act upon the recommendation at that time, and on the first of January, 1863, Mr. Lincoln issued his final proclamation of emancipation, naming the states and parts of states in which rebellion was held then to exist, and declaring free all the slaves within those states and parts of states. It did not apply to those slave states which had not joined the Confederacy, and, except that Maryland voluntarily freed her slaves near the end of the war, the institution remained lawful in such states as had not seceded, and actually continued to exist there until

December 18, 1865, when the ratification of the thirteenth amendment to the Constitution was officially proclaimed by Mr. Lincoln's successor.

So far as securing actual liberty to slaves within the Confederate lines was concerned, the emancipation proclamations had no effect whatever. They were probably not expected to have any. But they had an important bearing upon the conduct of the war and the state of the public mind. They made an end of all doubt about what Federal commanders in the field should do with slaves escaping to their lines. They satisfied the strong and growing abolitionist sentiment at the North, and they had some effect in alienating war Democrats and a considerable number of Republicans from the Federal cause, thus checking enlistments in some quarters, and impairing the administration's support.

This effect was far less marked than it would have been had Mr. Lincoln issued an emancipation proclamation earlier in the war when he was first urged to do so. Nevertheless the political effect was notable.

In the autumn elections there was a heavy falling off in Republican majorities, while in some important states Democrats relentlessly opposed to the administration and all its policies were elected to replace Republicans in office. This was notably the case in New York, where Horatio Seymour succeeded the Republican governor, E. D. Morgan, and a sentiment in hostility to the administration and to the war itself grew up, which was afterwards reflected in bloody riots when the time came for a draft of men for the army.

In Europe and particularly in England, the emancipation proclamation went far to change a former friendship for the Confederacy, which had at times threatened danger, into a strong moral support for the Federal cause.

But whatever moral and political results, for or against the Lincoln administration, this act may have produced, it had no perceptible effect upon the actual conduct of the war. That was still to be fought out at the cost of millions of treasure and multitudes of lives. Many of its greatest battles were still to come and its most important campaigns were yet to be fought out.

CHAPTER XXXII

Burnside's Fredericksburg Campaign

It has already been related that at the end of the battle of Sharpsburg, or Antietam, neither army cared to renew the contest. The two confronted each other within deadly firing distance for the space of twenty-four hours, doing nothing whatever. Apparently each had so far had enough of such fighting that neither cared to take the initiative for its renewal, yet each was ready enough to meet the other should that other care to assail it.

At the end of this waiting time Lee slowly retired towards the Potomac, McClellan not caring to pursue, and finally crossing the river the Confederates went into camp near Winchester.

So far from planning either to press Lee or to move by some other route upon Richmond, McClellan seems to have thought that he had done quite all that could be expected of him, in turning back the Confederate invasion of the region north of the Potomac. It appears from his dispatches to Mr. Lincoln that he purposed with his enormously superior army to take the defensive, post himself on the Potomac and stand ready to meet any second attempt that Lee might make to invade the North or to strike at Washington. Even for such a service he did not deem his army large enough, though it greatly outnumbered

Lee's, or sufficiently well equipped, though its equipment was notably superior to any that its adversary ever had, either before or after that time.

Instead of planning a campaign McClellan devoted himself to the making of multitudinous requisitions and ceaseless complaints.

Precious weeks of perfect campaigning weather were thus wasted, McClellan lying idly upon the north bank of the Potomac while Lee rested and reinforced his army near Winchester.

But if McClellan did nothing Lee was not so supine. He did not indeed begin a new campaign or bring on a battle, but he again awakened apprehension of invasion at the North by sending Stuart—the same cavalier who had ridden around McClellan's army near Richmond—to make a raid into Maryland and Pennsylvania which seemed for the time at least to be the precursor of a new movement of invasion by the Confederates.

On the tenth of October, with 1,800 picked cavalry men and some light field-pieces, Stuart crossed the river at Williamsport, above McClellan's position, made a rapid march to Chambersburg, Pennsylvania, and thence swept eastward and southward, riding unmolested entirely around McClellan and returning to Virginia on the thirteenth by passing the river again below Harper's Ferry.

He brought off a rich store of ammunition, supplies and many valuable horses, but the capture of these was neither the primary object nor the chief result of the daring raid. It was intended for moral effect, and it wrought such effect in a marked degree.

It awakened apprehension at the North, and it showed Lee to be still capable of an aggressiveness of which McClellan was obviously very greatly in fear. At the North as well as at the South it gave to the situation, after the late campaign, the appearance of one in which the Confederates seemed in better condition for further operations than their adversaries were.

Mr. Lincoln renewed his urgency for McClellan's advance, and finally succeeded in inducing him to cross the river and to seem at least to take the offensive. But after crossing into Virginia, McClellan did nothing effective. The history of Mr. Lincoln's effort to set the splendid Army of the Potomac in motion again, and the correspondence incident to that effort, are interesting, but they do not come within the purview of this present work.

Wearying at last of the inactivity Lincoln ordered General Burnside to take command of the Army of the Potomac, as McClellan's successor, and the new commander decided to move down the left bank of the Rappahannock and attempt a march upon Richmond by a short route.

Establishing his base of supplies at Acquia creek on the Potomac, only a few miles from Fredericksburg, with a railroad connection between, Burnside sat down on the north side of the Rappahannock, opposite Fredericksburg, the last of his columns reaching that point on the twentieth of November. Lee, moving upon a parallel line, reached Fredericksburg about the same time, and formed his lines to resist his enemy's contemplated advance.

Lee's army at that time numbered about 68,000

men, but before the battle it was swelled by reinforcements to nearly 80,000, and again reduced by detachments, to 68,000 or less. Burnside's force numbered about 120,000, with 147 guns, about twice Lee's strength in artillery.

Fredericksburg lies upon fairly level ground, immediately upon the southern bank of the Rappahannock, which at that point is not fordable at any season. In rear of the town and within cannon range, there is a line of bold hills beginning upon the river above the city and stretching in a curve around the town to the eastward where they gradually diminish in height and finally disappear.

Lee seized upon these hills and hurriedly fortified them, placing his artillery in effective positions and shielding his men with strong earthworks. Here he concentrated the greater part of his army under Longstreet on the left or west, and Jackson on the right or east, while D. H. Hill, with the remainder of the Confederate army was posted at Port Royal, twenty miles further down the river, eastward, to meet and repel any attempt that might be made to cross there and turn the flank of Lee's position.

This detachment of Hill with a strong force to a point so far away as to forbid his direct coöperation with the rest of the army during the battle, seriously diminished Lee's effective strength, but the advantage of position which he possessed and the advantage of fighting behind breastworks which his enemy must assail from the open, compensated him somewhat.

Burnside's first difficult task was to get his army

across the river. This he could do only by the use of frail pontoon bridges of which he purposed to lay five—three in front of the city and two below. The pontoon trains were slow in arriving, and when they came it was for a time impossible to put the pontoons into position, owing to the destructive fire of the sleepless sharpshooters Lee had posted along the banks to interfere with the work. In consequence of this and other difficulties it was not until the tenth of December that a crossing was made which Burnside had confidently expected to make more than a fortnight earlier.

In the meanwhile Lee had busied himself night and day in strengthening his position in every possible way, and he was soon fully prepared for the contest.

Burnside's first assault was made about ten o'clock on the morning of December 13. It was made in two columns, striking simultaneously, the one against Lee's right and the other against his left. The assault upon his right was at first attended with a partial success, but Jackson hurried troops to the breach and quickly hurled the assailants back in confusion, pursuing them nearly to the river's bank where a heavy artillery fire checked his progress. The Federal assault on that part of the Confederate line was not renewed during the day.

From official reports and otherwise, it appears that Burnside at first intended to direct his main attack upon this right wing of Lee's army. The hills there were lower and far less defensible than were those on the Confederate left, and offered, certainly, a much more tempting opportunity to the Federal com-

mander. It was without doubt the weakest point in Lee's line—the point which the Federals might have assailed with greatest hope of success or at least of inflicting the heaviest loss upon their foes. But, for some reason which has never been clearly explained, Burnside changed his plan of battle almost at the last moment, and directed his heaviest columns against Marye's Heights, the well-nigh impregnable stronghold of Lee's left wing. Here Lee had his batteries and a host of infantry strongly posted in formidable earthworks on top of the hills, in a position of great advantage.

For a body of troops to charge up Marye's Heights, bristling as they did with hostile and well served cannon, and defended by tens of thousands of veteran riflemen, was a task that might well have appalled even such sturdy fighters as composed the Army of the Potomac. But the matter was made more difficult by another peculiarity of the ground. Looked at from below, the hill seemed to present a smooth surface, ascending gently toward the works that defended it. But this appearance was deceptive. On the side of the hill well in advance of Lee's main line, and running athwart the Federal line of advance, there was a sunken road, faced with a stone wall, which formed as perfect a breastwork as any that an engineer could have constructed there. Into this sunken road Lee threw about two thousand riflemen, who lay there perfectly concealed from view and as well protected against adverse fire as men using rifles can be. Their orders were to withhold their fire until the enemy charging up the slope under a destructive

cannonade from above, and thinking of the works at the top as the first obstacle to be encountered, should reach a point a score or so of yards in front of the sunken road, whence they could be swept away like dust before a housemaid's broom. It was as deadly a trap as could be imagined, and its concealment was perfect. Yet when the Federal general decided to make his main attack upon Lee's left, there was no course open to him but to take this doubly defended hill by assault or suffer fearful disaster, as he did, in a futile attempt to do so. For the nature of the ground on Lee's farther left rendered it impossible to turn his flank or try conclusions with him otherwise than by a direct charge upon Marye's Heights.

The first attack was made by French's division. It was already suffering terribly under the fire from the hilltop, when it came upon the sunken road and was instantly swept away by a hailstorm of bullets. Retiring, French left about one half of his men on the field, dead or wounded.

Hancock charged next with five thousand men and was driven back with a loss of two thousand or more.

The exact nature of the case was not even yet understood. The position in the sunken road was still masked to the Federal commanders. But French's and Hancock's attempts had conclusively shown that no courage, no determination, no heroism however high, could enable mortal men to carry that hill by assault. Nevertheless Burnside persisted where a wiser leader would either have withdrawn or have changed his plan of battle. He sent another, and another, and still another division into that fire of hell,

only to see them instantly hurled back, shattered fragments of most gallant commands, beaten, broken and well-nigh destroyed by reason of a blundering obstinacy on the part of their commanding general.

Finally Hooker was ordered to make another attempt—the sixth of those futile and bloody charges. He pointed out to Burnside the uselessness of the effort and begged him to abandon without further needless sacrifice of gallant men's lives, an operation which had already been proved to be hopeless.

In a blind rage Burnside seemed unable to comprehend what his subordinates saw clearly enough. He insisted upon sending Hooker's command also into that slaughter pen. They rushed forward,—four thousand as brave fellows as ever fought in battle—and a few minutes later seventeen hundred of them lay stretched upon the field, their bodies riddled with Confederate bullets, while their comrades, unable to achieve the impossible, fell back as the remnants of the other divisions had done before.

The Confederate war furnished two conspicuous manifestations of supreme heroism on the part of large bodies of men—one upon one side, the other upon the other. Pickett's charge at Gettysburg was one of these. This series of six charges up Marye's Heights was the other.

When the sixth assault ended as its predecessors had done, the time had manifestly come to end the battle. A wiser commander would have ended it much earlier, indeed. Having lost 12,353 men in an ill-directed contest Burnside withdrew to the river-bank, baffled and beaten beyond recovery.

The Army of the Potomac had won all the glory for itself that heroic conduct can give in the absence of victory, but it had need now of rest, recruitment and a new commander.

Burnside was clearly not equal to the task of commanding such an army in a contest with such an adversary as Robert E. Lee. He had himself passed precisely that judgment upon his own capacities when on three former occasions the command of the Army of the Potomac was offered to him. But now that he had accepted that command and had led to disastrous defeat what somebody at the time characterized as "the finest army on the planet," disappointment and chagrin seem for the moment to have unseated his reason. He refused to recognize the extent of the disaster he had suffered or the conspicuousness and completeness of his defeat. His army was torn and broken as no other great army on either side had been before. It was weary with futile battling, discouraged by a failure that had involved terrible losses, and the fact that it was not demoralized was due only to the splendid courage and devotion of the soldiers themselves. Worse than all it had lost confidence in the capacity of its leader.

Nevertheless Burnside, reckless of any consequences that might follow, was determined that night to renew the battle on the following morning, himself leading his own former corps, the Ninth, in still another desperate attempt to carry Marye's Heights. Earnest protests and persuasions succeeded at last in inducing him to abandon this purpose, and after remaining inactive for a day on the bank of the river,

he withdrew his army, under cover of night, to the other side of the river and the fearfully disastrous Fredericksburg campaign was at an end.

Military critics have wondered much that Lee, whose loss in the battle had been only 5,309 men, and whose troops were almost wild with the enthusiasm of victory, permitted his badly beaten adversary to remain unmolested on the southern bank of the stream for twenty-four hours and then quietly to retire. Burnside's position and the condition of his army strongly invited attack. He had a wide and deep river behind him, with only a frail pontoon bridge spanning it. Had he been defeated there by assault on the part of the victors there would have been no way of escape open to him. Destruction or surrender must have followed.

On the other hand, his force still heavily outnumbered Lee's and it was in no way demoralized. Defeated and discouraged as it was its spirit was unbroken, and had Lee left his works and assailed it in the open, the issue of the conflict might have been very uncertain. It is alleged that Lee's lieutenants urged a tempestuous assault, and that Lee's chief reason for rejecting the advice was born of his hope that Burnside would himself on the next day renew the attempt to dislodge the Confederates from their well-nigh impregnable position.

However that may be, Lee did not in fact assume the offensive; Burnside retired during darkness to the farther side of the river and the two armies settled themselves in winter quarters, Lee presently sending large bodies of men to the southwest to rein-

force the armies there, where active warfare was in progress, and still more active warfare threatened.

The military operations of the season that thus closed had been in every way remarkable. Four distinct campaigns had been fought, all of them severe, and all marked by brilliant strategy and heroic conduct on the part of the troops on either side. McClellan's siege of Richmond, which had filled the South with gloomy apprehension, had been broken in a series of bloody and impressive battles, and the Army of the Potomac had been forced to withdraw for the defense of Washington.

Pope's campaign with his Army of Virginia had been conspicuously brought to naught by brilliant strategy and desperate fighting.

Lee's invasion of Maryland had for a time reversed the former order of things, putting the Federals on the defensive. It had ended at last in a battle so indecisive that both sides claimed it as a victory. Finally Burnside's well planned but badly executed Fredericksburg campaign had resulted in very conspicuous defeat and failure after one of the bloodiest battles of the war.

The net result of the four campaigns was one of very great advantage to the Confederates. The gloomy apprehension with which they had looked forward to that summer's military operations was changed to exultant joy and confidence as they contemplated the situation when the work of the year was over. They had discovered a commander for whom their adversary had as yet found no match in his mastery of the art of war. They were reinspirited

by the results achieved and were full of confidence for the future.

On the other side, the North rejoiced in the splendid fighting quality of the Army of the Potomac, as demonstrated in the Seven Days' battles, at Manassas, at Antietam, and most of all, at Fredericksburg. The danger which at one time seemed so imminently to threaten their capital and the cities farther north, had been averted, and they had confidence that the coming spring would bring results in Virginia as pleasing to them as those that had been achieved by Grant in the west during the year that was coming to an end.

The struggle of the giants had but just begun.

CHAPTER XXXIII

Halleck's Treatment of Grant

When Halleck assumed command at Pittsburg Landing after the battle of Shiloh he seemed intent, not only upon depriving Grant of the privilege of vigorously following up the victory he had won but also upon "snubbing," ignoring and humiliating that successful general in every way possible. If Grant's tremendous and at last successful struggle to force Beauregard back to his defenses at Corinth had been a crime instead of a heroic achievement, his commanding general could scarcely have punished it in more annoying and humiliating ways than he did.

It was a sore affliction to Grant to have command taken from him at the moment when he saw before him a perfect opportunity to pluck the ripe fruits of his obstinate fighting by pressing forward in overwhelming force for the completion of the conquest for which that fighting had provided an easy and certain way. It was still more severely painful to him to sit still and see all the easy possibilities of the situation he had created, deliberately thrown away by martinet incapacity.

To a man like General Grant, simple minded and sincere, a man whose sole ambition was to force the war to a successful conclusion within the briefest possible time, and whose vigor in action seemed to make

that result certain with the masterful means now in hand at Pittsburg Landing, this foolish frittering away of the opportunity he had created by his splendid fighting, must have been the most painful of all the punishments which Halleck at that time inflicted upon him for his impertinence in wresting a great victory from a calamitous defeat, before his superior officer could reach the field and reap the credit for himself.

But Halleck had other humiliations in store for his impertinently successful lieutenant the late Galena clerk, and the now admired and applauded officer of volunteers. Grant even yet had no rank in the regular army, and he had ventured to advise the temporary dissolution of the regular army in order that the skill and training of its officers might be utilized—with capacity alone as the test—in making the volunteers, who after all constituted the country's chief reliance for its salvation, as effective in the field as if they had been regulars.

We have seen how, after Grant's conquest of Forts Henry and Donelson, and the complete rupture of the first Confederate line of defense, Halleck forbade him to gather the fruits of his victory, suspended him from command and seemingly threatened him with arrest. After Shiloh it would not have been prudent for Halleck again to suggest the arrest of a general whose name was on every lip as that of the one Federal commander who was capable of winning victories while all others were meeting conspicuous defeats. But Halleck had other arrows in his quiver. He left Grant as nominally his second

in command, and, in form at least, assigned him specifically to the command of the right wing of the army. But he proceeded from the beginning to ignore his second in command. He summoned him to none of those councils and consultations to which he invited Grant's own subordinates. Even in the matter of orders to that wing of the army which he had technically placed in Grant's charge, he ignored all the courtesies and flagrantly violated all the usages of war, by sending his commands directly to division generals, instead of sending them through General Grant's headquarters—thus rivaling the discourtesy of Judah P. Benjamin in his dealings with Stonewall Jackson. This left Grant in humiliating ignorance even of the orders issued to divisions which were supposed to be under his command, and for whose movements and conduct he was held responsible. His situation was unendurable, even to a man of his robust habits of mind, and by way of relief he finally asked permission to establish his headquarters as District Commander, at Memphis, a city which had by that time come into Federal control.

These details are recited here, not by way of apology, or defense of General Grant. His fame needs no defense, and very certainly his conduct in war needs no apology. Moreover all these circumstances, and others that reflect still more unfavorably upon Halleck's extraordinary treatment of the only Federal general who at that period of the war seemed able to achieve victories, are calmly and fully set forth in General Grant's own memoirs. But such details are necessary here, in explanation of that fair

and full, and impartial history of the Confederate war, which is intended in these volumes.

There were repeated occasions in the course of the struggle when vigor of generalship on the one side or upon the other, would very certainly have brought the war to an early conclusion, sparing both sides the tremendous sacrifices which a lack of capable generalship in the end entailed upon both.

This post-Shiloh imbecility was one of those conspicuous, and conspicuously neglected occasions. There is not room for doubt that if Halleck had remained in his St. Louis headquarters, and had permitted Grant with the now combined armies of himself, Buell and Pope, to prosecute an instant and vigorous campaign, the whole Mississippi Valley would have been speedily brought under Federal control, with all the consequences that such a conquest must have involved.

After the battle of Shiloh Grant had by his own estimate 120,000 men at and near Pittsburg Landing, or within easy call. For in addition to Buell's army Pope had reinforced him with 30,000 men. Beauregard had about 30,000 effectives at Corinth—or after Van Dorn reinforced him, perhaps 47,000. Grant's own expert opinion expressed in print, is that within two days he could and would—if let alone—have captured Corinth, driving the Confederate forces there into disorderly retreat if not compelling their surrender, and capturing all their stores. He would then have been in position to move in overwhelming force upon Vicksburg and Port Hudson, points not yet strongly fortified or heavily garrisoned.

Capturing them, as he easily could have done, he would have made the Federals masters of the Mississippi above Baton Rouge, while Farragut was making himself master of all the lower reaches of the river. In the meanwhile Grant would have prevented that concentration and recruitment of Beauregard's army for which Halleck gave generous leisure to his enemy by delaying his own advance from Pittsburg Landing for three weeks of preparation and then consuming an entire month in pushing a force of three men to his adversary's one over an unobstructed and undefended space of less than twenty miles only to find when he got to his destination that his enemy, greatly strengthened, had in leisurely fashion retired to another position, taking with him every pound of provisions and every round of ammunition he possessed.

Here were seven of the most precious weeks of the war lost, and the loss is very inadequately measured by that statement. It is not too much to say that Halleck's extraordinary deliberation and delay alone made possible and certain all the terrible fighting and all the losses of human life incident to the Vicksburg campaign, just as the paralyzing incapacity of his orders after the capture of Fort Donelson, made needlessly possible and destructively certain the tremendous battling of the Confederates at a later period at Nashville, Chattanooga, Franklin, Lookout Mountain, Chickamauga and in the Atlanta campaign.

If military etiquette upon either of these occasions had permitted General Grant, with the support his words would undoubtedly have had from Sherman,

Buell and Thomas, to set forth clearly the conditions, needs, and opportunities in the Western Department, the authorities at Washington would pretty certainly have set Halleck's embarrassing authority aside, thus giving demonstrated capacity the license it desired to achieve results of incalculable benefit to the National arms. But Halleck alone of all the generals in that quarter enjoyed the privilege of direct communication with the War Department, and Halleck so adroitly represented—perhaps he did not consciously or intentionally misrepresent—the facts of the situation, that presently, on the eleventh of July, he was appointed to succeed McClellan as Commander in Chief of all the Union armies.

This was perhaps the most astonishing, not to say the most unwise, appointment made on either side during the entire course of the war, unless we except Mr. Jefferson Davis's appointment of Pemberton after he had lost Vicksburg, to the position of military adviser of himself, with apparent authority to control and command even Robert E. Lee.

In the meanwhile Halleck had done all that was possible to him to humiliate General Grant and to deny him everything in the shape of opportunity. General Grant, in his "Memoirs," (page 219), pathetically says:

> Although next to him [Halleck] in rank, and nominally in command of my old district and army, I was ignored as much as if I had been at the most distant point of territory within my jurisdiction; and although I was in command of all the troops engaged at Shiloh, I was not permitted to see one of the reports of General Buell or his subordinates in that

battle until they were published by the War Department long after the event.

Again on page 225, General Grant tells of an occasion when he suggested a military movement to General Halleck—a thing that the second in command might very well have been expected to do. After explaining to his readers what his suggestion was, General Grant adds: "I was silenced so quickly that I felt that possibly I had suggested an unmilitary movement."

Yet when Halleck was ordered to Washington to assume chief command he saw clearly that it would not be prudent in the existing state of the public mind to make any other than Grant the commander at Corinth. He therefore sent word to Grant in Memphis to report at Corinth. But he said nothing whatever to him about his own appointment to the command of all the armies, or about his intended departure for Washington, or even about his intention that Grant should assume command at Corinth. He merely directed him to report there, leaving it entirely to uninformed conjecture whether he was merely to report in person for some instruction or was to remove his headquarters from Memphis to that point. In this uncertainty Grant telegraphed asking whether or not he was to take his staff with him. To this Halleck curtly and discourteously replied: "This place will be your headquarters. You can judge for yourself."

CHAPTER XXXIV

Grant at Corinth

When Grant took command at Corinth he found matters in an exceedingly confused and embarrassing condition. In the first place his authority was so ill defined that he could do nothing of importance without risk of subjecting himself to censure and perhaps even to a trial by court martial for having exceeded his authority, while if he left anything undone by reason of his uncertainty as to the scope of his command, he must do so at equal risk of censure or court martial for neglect.

Halleck had been in command of the entire department and of all the forces within its borders. In leaving General Grant as his successor he did not invest him with a similarly comprehensive authority. Neither did he make it clear that such authority was denied to him. So far as his orders indicated Grant was still only a district commander, having authority only over troops within the district of West Tennessee, whose eastern boundary was the Cumberland river, beyond which Halleck had sent a large part of the forces that had been under his command at Corinth. And yet Grant was practically a department commander. His own exposition of the situation is so clear, succinct and complete, that no paraphrase can better it or equal it. On page 233 *et seq.* of his "Memoirs," General Grant wrote:

I left Memphis for my new field without delay and reached Corinth on the fifteenth of the month. General Halleck remained until the seventeenth of July; but he was very uncommunicative, and gave me no information as to what I had been called to Corinth for. When General Halleck left to assume the duties of general-in-chief I remained in command of the District of West Tennessee. Practically I became a department commander because no one was assigned to that position over me, and I made my reports direct to the General-in-chief; but I was not assigned to the position of department commander until the twenty-fifth of October. General Halleck, while commanding the Department of the Mississippi, had had control as far east as a line drawn from Chattanooga north. My district only embraced West Tennessee and Kentucky west of the Cumberland river. Buell, with the Army of the Ohio, had as previously stated, been ordered east towards Chattanooga, with instructions to repair the Memphis and Charleston railroad as he advanced. Troops had been sent North by Halleck along the line of the Mobile and Ohio railroad to put it in repair as far as Columbus. Other troops were stationed on the [Mississippi Central] railroad from Jackson, Tennessee, to Grand Junction, and still others on the road west to Memphis. The remainder of the magnificent army of 120,000 men which entered Corinth on the thirtieth of May, had now become so scattered that I was put entirely on the defensive in a territory whose population was hostile to the Union.

One of the first things I had to do was to construct fortifications at Corinth better suited to the garrison that could be spared to man them. The structures that had been built during the months of May and June were left as monuments to the skill of the engineer, and others were constructed in a few days, plainer in design, but suited to the command available to defend them.

In brief Halleck had completely thrown away one of the most brilliant opportunities of the war. He had found an army of 120,000 men, flushed with vic-

tory and full of spirit, concentrated at a point in the center of the Confederacy, from which it was not only possible but easy to advance in overwhelming force in any direction, while the inflow of recruits at that time was great enough to make good and even to double the losses that battle might involve. On the other hand the Confederates had lost so heavily at Shiloh that they did not venture to make a stand in their intrenchments at Corinth, even though Halleck's extraordinary dilatoriness gave them seven weeks of precious time in which to recruit their army, strengthen their defenses and receive reinforcements of 17,000 seasoned and veteran troops that were presently sent to them.

General Grant has pronounced the positive and unhesitating opinion that an energetic advance immediately after the Shiloh battle, with the enormously superior forces then concentrated at that point would have resulted beyond a peradventure in the conquest of Corinth within two days, with the capture of all the stores and ammunition there as a necessary incident and the capture of Beauregard's army as at least a promising possibility. By consuming three weeks in preparation for an advance which ought to have been made at once and by wasting a whole month more in an advance by parallels, where an advance at the quickstep with fixed bayonets, was all that was needed, Halleck had completely thrown away this opportunity.

But even then, even after wasting seven weeks in reaching Corinth, it was not too late to achieve results of the most momentous consequence. On page 227

of his "Memoirs," General Grant gives this expert opinion of the situation and the opportunity:

The Confederates were now driven out of West Tennessee, and on the sixth of June, after a well contested naval battle, the National forces took possession of Memphis, and held the Mississippi river from its source to that point. The railroad from Columbus to Corinth was at once put in good condition and held by us. We had garrisons at Donelson, Clarksville and Nashville on the Cumberland river, and held the Tennessee river from its mouth to Eastport. New Orleans and Baton Rouge had fallen into the possession of the National forces, so that now the Confederates at the West were narrowed down for all communication with Richmond to the single line of road running east from Vicksburg. To dispossess them of this, therefore, became a matter of the first importance. The possession of the Mississippi by us, from Memphis to Baton Rouge, was also a most important object. It would be equal to the amputation of a limb in its weakening effect upon the enemy. After the capture of Corinth a movable force of 80,000 men, besides enough to hold all the territory acquired, *could have been set in motion for the accomplishment of any great campaign for the suppression of the rebellion.*[1] In addition to this, fresh troops were being raised to swell the effective force.

But the work of depletion commenced. Buell, with the Army of the Ohio, was sent east, following the line of the Memphis and Charleston railroad. This he was ordered to repair as he advanced—only to have it destroyed by small guerilla bands or other troops as soon as he was out of the way. If he had been sent directly to Chattanooga, as rapidly as he could march, sending two or three divisions along the line of the railroad from Nashville forward, he could have arrived with but little fighting, and would have saved much of the loss of life which was afterwards incurred in gaining

[1] The italics are not General Grant's, but are placed by the author of the present work, upon words that seem to him to be pregnant of criticism and explanation. AUTHOR

Chattanooga. Bragg would then not have had time to raise an army to contest the possession of Middle and East Tennessee and Kentucky; the battles of Stone river and Chickamauga would not necessarily have been fought; Burnside would not have been besieged in Knoxville without the power of helping himself or escaping; the battle of Chattanooga would not have been fought. These are the negative advantages, if the term negative is applicable, which would probably have resulted from prompt movements after Corinth fell into the possession of the National forces. The positive results might have been, a bloodless advance to Atlanta, to Vicksburg, or to any other desired point south of Corinth in the interior of Mississippi.

Will the reader bear in mind, that these military criticisms are not made by the author of the present work, although they fully commend themselves to his judgment, but are the calm and deliberate utterances of Ulysses S. Grant, by all consent the ablest general that ever commanded a Federal army, and a general minutely familiar with every detail of the situation which presented itself after Shiloh? They bear the authority both of intimate knowledge and of demonstrated military skill. Reduced to their lowest terms they amount to this: If Halleck had been an officer fit to command an army, he would have rushed upon Corinth with his three to one force on the very day on which he assumed command. The result could not have been in the least degree doubtful. But even after he had wasted seven precious weeks—three of them in preparation for an advance for which he was already fully prepared, and four more in an advance over a wholly undefended space of nineteen miles which he ought to have covered in

one day or a day and a half at most,—there was still open to a capable general an opportunity which Halleck utterly failed to see or to seize. He had under his command 120,000 veteran troops, of the very best fighting quality and subordinately commanded by such masters of the military art as Grant, Sherman, Thomas, Buell, Lew Wallace, Nelson, Prentiss and their fit fellows. Making the most liberal allowance for detachments to guard railroads and to hold every acre of country conquered, General Grant says he could have mustered an effective army of 80,000 men or more for aggressive operations in any direction that might have seemed best to him, against which the Confederates could not have opposed more than 30,000 or 40,000 at the utmost. The whole central South lay before him where to choose. His opportunity was one the like of which came to no other commander North or South, during the whole course of the war. He threw it utterly away. He scattered his superbly overwhelming army to the four winds, under orders that rendered their courage and their enterprise futile, and left Grant in a hopelessly defensive position, with no army capable of any measure of aggression, and with an authority so ill defined that he could not order a concentration even in the smallest way.

And yet, this man, Halleck, who had never fought a battle in his life, and who had never commanded an army except to scatter and waste it, was chosen to command all the armies of the United States.

Surely the country could not have been worse served if the administration had been intent upon

losing the war instead of carrying it to success. And very certainly the long domination of this peculiarly incapable man served to embarrass "enterprises of great pith and moment," and to prolong the destructive, fratricidal struggle for long after the time during which, under wiser counsels, it would have endured.

Curiously enough no explanation of this costly blunder has ever been suggested. We know of course that Halleck's first appointment to command in the West was made upon General Scott's recommendation, at a period of the war when nobody knew or could know what officers of the old army were capable of achieving results and what ones were unfit for command. General Scott's mistake in selecting Halleck for a highly responsible command was pardonable under the circumstances. But after his extraordinary dealings with the victories at Fort Henry and Fort Donelson, and still more conspicuously after his phenomenal failure to seize upon the opportunity that came to him ready made by the results achieved at Shiloh, it is absolutely impossible for the most imaginative critic to conceive of a reason which might have justified the administration at Washington in selecting this man with his doubly demonstrated incapacity to direct all the armies of the Union in their operations.

Not only was Grant left upon the defensive with a force too small to permit aggression of any kind on his part, but even this scant force was rapidly and very dangerously depleted by orders from Halleck's Washington headquarters. The Confederates and guerrillas were daily threatening his communications

and frequently attacking his defensive detachments in force. He was confronted on the south by an effective force of 35,000 men under Van Dorn and Price, threatening Memphis, Corinth, Bolivar and other points. Grant's concern for the safety of Memphis, isolated as that post was by the Confederate occupation of Grand Junction—between Memphis and Corinth—was lightened only by the fact, as he himself suggestively put the matter, that "it was in Sherman's hands."

Under this stress of circumstances, and with extraordinary disregard of what disastrous consequences there might be involved, Halleck on the fourteenth of August ordered Grant still further to weaken himself by sending two more divisions to Buell on his tedious march eastward. Again on the second of September, Grant received orders to send still further reinforcements to Buell, and two days later Gordon Granger's division was detached and sent, by orders from Washington, to Louisville. On the twenty-second Colonel Rodney Mason, whom Grant had forgiven for arrant cowardice at Shiloh, made a dastardly surrender of Clarksville with half a regiment or more.

Thus the one commander who had thus far shown himself capable of conceiving campaigns and conducting them to success, was left with a totally inadequate and constantly diminishing force, to waste his time in guarding a vast territory while Bragg was marching from Rome, Georgia, with a strong Confederate army toward Chattanooga, meaning to seize that position before Buell could get there. In his "Memoirs" General Grant gives expression to his regret

that he was not permitted to move, instead of sitting still, at a time when even with the depleted force under his command, he still felt confidant of his ability to crush and destroy Bragg's force, thus forestalling and rendering unnecessary the very severe and bloody campaigns which were destined to follow for lack of such a timely blow.

The Confederates, early in the spring, had enacted and enforced a conscription law which had resulted in putting every man in the South capable of bearing arms, into the army. At the North—largely because of the defeat of McClellan and Pope in Virginia, and of Halleck's astonishing failure to follow up the Shiloh campaign with aggressive operations—the volunteering had so far ceased that Mr. Lincoln's call for an additional 300,000 men met with a meager and unsatisfactory response. In several states—New York among them—the quotas were not furnished by volunteering and it was necessary to order a draft to fill up the ranks depleted by battle and disease. The North at this time had more than twice as many men in the field as the South could muster. But with every southward advance of Federal armies more and more men must be withdrawn from the active work of aggression and set to guard places captured, to maintain lines of communication and to hold regions that had been overrun. Moreover the Southerners were mainly fighting on the defensive, which in some degree compensated for their lack of equal numbers. Still again the enlistment of every man at the South was to endure to the end of the war, while very large numbers of men at the North were enlisted for

shorter terms, some of them for only three months or a hundred days, scarcely time enough in which to discipline and train them into effectiveness.

Without offense, also,—and certainly no offense is intended—it is fair to say that the volunteers and conscripts who at this period of the war came into the Confederate service, were in many cases morally superior to the men brought by draft processes into the armies of the Union. They were all Americans for one thing, while great multitudes of those enlisted or drafted into the service at the North were recent immigrants from Europe who neither knew nor cared for the issues involved in the contest but who entered the service as they might have accepted any other employment, for the sake of the money returns promised. These money returns included, besides pay, rations and a clothing allowance, a bounty of extraordinary liberality, amounting in many cases to a larger sum of money than its recipients had ever dreamed of owning, as the price of substitution. For while at the South every man included within the terms of the conscription law must shoulder his musket and go to the front, whatever his wealth or social position might be, the case was very different at the North. There men who had the means of buying a substitute very often did so. Many who lacked the means or were unwilling to pay the high price exacted by those who stood ready to sell themselves as substitutes, emigrated to Canada or went to Europe to escape the military service.

These facts undoubtedly created a disparity between the two contending armies, which had not

existed during the earlier part of the war. The immigrants and the purchased substitutes who joined the Federal armies after the campaigns of 1862 were over, were not morally the equals of the native or long naturalized Americans who had fought so heroically around Richmond, at the second battle of Manassas, at Sharpsburg, and at Shiloh. For this as well as for the other reasons indicated, the North had need of larger numbers than the South, in order to carry the war to success.

The Confederates now held a smaller section of the Mississippi than before, but they held that more strongly. A general of capacity, after Shiloh, might easily have wrested its possession from them, as General Grant has pointed out. Under a general incapacity, nothing was done to that end and the Confederates, thus favored by Federal neglect, had so far fortified their strongholds that the dislodgment which would have been easy in the spring could now be accomplished only by one of the severest, bloodiest and most perilous campaigns of the war. Thus all that had been gained above or below, towards the reconquest of the Mississippi, had gone for next to naught. For the possession of its mouth on the one hand, and the control of its upper reaches on the other, meant nothing so long as the Confederates held Vicksburg and Port Hudson, thus obstructing a river whose sole value was as a highway.

In Virginia the Southern arms had been successful in an extraordinary degree. McClellan's splendid army of 120,000 men had been broken and beaten back from the very gates of Richmond, and sent

hurriedly northward to defend the National capital itself against threatened capture. Pope, at the head of an army quite equal to any that the Confederates could muster, had been outmaneuvered, outfought and overthrown at Manassas, and hurled back upon the defenses of Washington as a needed refuge. Lee had invaded Maryland, his cavalry amusing themselves by unopposed marches into Pennsylvania. Finally Burnside's attempt at Fredericksburg with an army overwhelming in its numbers, had resulted in fearfully bloody failure.

As the autumn drew on Grant was left at Corinth, by no fault of his own but because of Halleck's orders, with a force barely sufficient, if sufficient at all, to hold the railroads and outlying posts which he was set to guard. In his front there lay a threatening army stronger than any that he could hope to bring together at any one point. To the eastward Buell, under paralyzing orders, was slowly marching toward Chattanooga, while Bragg with a strong Confederate army was hastening northward to seize that commanding strategic position and to push thence northward with high hopes and fair prospects of making the Ohio river before the year was out, the dividing line between the Northern and Southern forces, replacing the line which by Grant's successes had been drawn the whole width of two states further south.

On these points the testimony of General Grant is too direct, too conclusive and too valuable to be omitted here, or to be given otherwise than in his own carefully chosen words. On page 237 *et seq.* of the "Memoirs" he writes:

General Buell had left Corinth about the tenth of June to march upon Chattanooga. Bragg, who had succeeded Beauregard in command, sent one division from Tupelo on the twenty-seventh of June for the same place. This gave Buell about seventeen days' start. If he had not been required to repair the railroad as he advanced, the march could have been made in eighteen days at the outside, and Chattanooga must have been reached by the national forces before the rebels could have possibly got there.

On page 240 we have this careful estimate of the situation at the beginning of September:

On the seventh of September I learned of the advance of Van Dorn and Price, apparently upon Corinth. One division was brought from Memphis to Bolivar to meet any emergency that might arise from this move of the enemy. I was much concerned because my first duty after holding the territory acquired within my command, was to prevent further reinforcing of Bragg in Middle Tennessee. Already the army of Northern Virginia had defeated the army under General Pope, and was invading Maryland. In the center General Buell was on his way to Louisville and Bragg marching parallel to him with a large Confederate force for the Ohio river. I had been constantly called upon to reinforce Buell until at this time my entire force numbered less than 50,000 men of all arms. This included everything from Cairo south within my jurisdiction. If I too should be driven back the Ohio river would become the line dividing the belligerents west of the Alleghanies while at the east the line was already farther north than when hostilities commenced at the opening of the war. It is true Nashville was never given up after its first capture, but it would have been isolated and the garrison there would have been obliged to beat a hasty retreat if the troops in West Tennessee had been compelled to fall back. To say, at the end of the second year of the war the line dividing the contestants at the east was pushed north of Maryland, a state that had not seceded, and at the west beyond Kentucky, and this State which had been always

loyal, would have been discouraging indeed. As it was many loyal people despaired in the Fall of 1862 of ever saving the Union. The Administration at Washington was much concerned for the safety of the cause it held so dear.

This was a most trying time for a man of General Grant's overmastering instinct of activity. The task set him of guarding a vast territory and three railroad lines against a ceaselessly active and enterprising enemy, gave him occupation enough it is true. But the situation forbade him to concentrate anywhere, or to do anything indeed except repel assaults first upon one insignificant point and then upon another. A mere catalogue of the actions fought at this time in that quarter would occupy pages of print. Only one of them had enough significance to require mention in this history. On the thirteenth of September the Confederate general, Sterling Price, with a considerable force occupied Iuka, a town on the Memphis and Charleston railroad, about twenty miles east of Corinth. The fact was a significant commentary upon the unwisdom of the orders which delayed Buell's march on Chattanooga, in the end defeating its purpose, in order to repair a railroad, any point upon which the Confederates could seize at will in spite of Grant's utmost diligence in an impracticable and indeed impossible defense.

Grant feared that the object of Price's movement might be something of vastly more importance than the destruction of a railroad station, as indeed it was. Price's purpose in seizing Iuka was to get control of the railroad east of that point long enough to enable him to send heavy reinforcements to Bragg, who was

at that time pushing Buell back upon Louisville, with the prospect, if reinforced in timely fashion, of capturing that city, compelling Grant's retirement to Cairo, and establishing the Ohio river as the northern boundary and the military line of the Confederacy. Accordingly Grant dangerously weakened several exposed points in order to concentrate under Rosecrans a sufficient force to drive Price out of Iuka before the main body of the Confederate army south of Corinth could join him there.

The operation resulted in some strenuous fighting. Price was driven back and his scheme was defeated. The details of the battle need not be recounted here. They belong to the domain of minute history, covering special campaigns. For the purposes of a general history of the war, it is sufficient to point out the only strategic purpose involved in the movement, and its defeat by a timely and judicious activity.

CHAPTER XXXV

Bragg's Campaign Against Louisville

Strategically considered there was no point in the middle South so important to either side at that time as Chattanooga. Either side having possession of that place could hold it against a force outnumbering its garrison many times. More important still, its possession by the Confederates opened to them three or four different routes of advance into Kentucky, which no enemy with anything like an equal force could effectually guard or defend. To hold one of these routes was to open another. Confederate possession of Chattanooga at that period of the war meant therefore the possible and even probable conquest of all eastern Kentucky, the isolation and fall of Nashville, the reconquest of the Tennessee and Cumberland rivers, and the enforced retirement of Grant's advanced army to the line of the Ohio river.

All these consequences, as General Grant has said, were the probable results of a Confederate occupation of Chattanooga in force, and had Bragg succeeded in the campaign he directed from that point all these consequences would have been morally certain to befall the Union arms, as General Grant saw at the time and afterwards set forth in his "Memoirs."

On the other hand the seizure of Chattanooga by a Federal force of consequence, would have closed and

barred the gate to all further advances of the Confederates into Tennessee and Kentucky. It would have made the southern boundary of Tennessee permanently the most northerly military line of division between North and South, making of Kentucky a state completely saved to the Union and of Tennessee a state completely recovered to it.

General Halleck had sagacity enough to see, at least in some degree, the strategic necessity of seizing upon Chattanooga. Accordingly he ordered Buell to march upon and occupy that place. But he seems to have forgotten that there were energetic men in command of Southern armies, men quite as capable as he was of recognizing an opportunity. Instead of sending Buell post haste to occupy the place, as General Grant has pointed out that he should have done, leaving the repair of the Memphis and Charleston railroad to details of troops to be made after the main point was gained, he threw away the advantage of a seventeen days' start and a shorter line than that of his enemy, and kept Buell for many weary weeks repairing bridges and culverts while Bragg was hurrying with all possible speed to throw a commanding force into Chattanooga.

The result was that Bragg captured the commanding strategic position and Buell was left "in the air," as military men say, not knowing where to concentrate or in what direction his enemy was to be expected. The story of his haltings, his hesitations, his confusion of mind, his orders and counter orders, as given in General Van Horne's "History of the Army of the Cumberland," and in the accompanying docu-

ments, is pitiful in its revelation of the perplexities of an earnest, sincere and very capable officer who had been made the victim of "orders" from an incapable but relentlessly exacting "superior."

It would be an idle and wearisome waste of space to recount here all of Buell's marchings and countermarchings, all the orders given and countermanded, and given again only to be again rescinded, which marked the progress of that campaign. For the purposes of history it is enough to say that Bragg, with his Confederates, in the end succeeded in maneuvering Buell out of Tennessee and across Kentucky to the neighborhood of Louisville, while sending a dangerously strong detachment into eastern Kentucky to threaten Covington and Cincinnati. The purpose of this detachment was to compel Buell to divide his force and send a part of it up the river to defend Cincinnati, thus weakening the defense of Louisville, which city Bragg intended to assail and confidently hoped to capture.

That purpose failed. The moment that Cincinnati was threatened, men in multitudes, who had not before thought of enlisting, swarmed to the point of danger and freely offered themselves for its defense. It was not necessary for Buell to spare a single regiment for Cincinnati's protection, beyond those already holding eastern Kentucky, and even these, when Bragg's campaign developed its purpose against Louisville, were able to spare considerable detachments to aid Buell in Louisville's defense. But all this is an anticipation of events. Let us tell the story as it occurred.

During the spring and summer of 1862, and after Buell's main army had marched westward to reinforce Grant at Pittsburg Landing, there had been almost ceaseless campaigning and fighting along the upper Tennessee river, in Alabama, and around Cumberland Gap. Generals O. M. Mitchell, G. W. Morgan and Negley were the active agents in this campaigning on the Federal side; Kirby Smith was the Confederate chieftain with John Morgan and N. B. Forrest for his enterprising cavalry raiders. The fighting was often severe and the maneuvers brilliant on both sides, but in the absence of strong armies it was after all scarcely more than skirmishing, involving no battle of importance and no movement of strategic consequence enough to require mention in a general history of the war. The struggle was the outcome of a purpose on either side to maintain the strategic status quo, or if possible to improve it here and there where opportunity offered. Substantially the result was to leave matters about as they had been, except that the continual activity and the frequent encounters of arms served to discipline and steady the raw recruits who were coming in on both sides. The operations of that spring and summer served to make soldiers of the new men North and South.

It was not until after Halleck sent Buell to seize upon the strategic position at Chattanooga, and Bragg, seventeen days later, withdrew his main body from Grant's front and set out by the roundabout way of Mobile to anticipate Buell, that the war in that part of the country again assumed strategic and historical importance.

Buell's march eastward was necessarily very slow and halting, and during its continuance he was compelled to scatter his forces in a very dangerous fashion. There had been two blunders made at the outset—both of them made by General Halleck against General Buell's protest. One of them was in making Corinth the base of supplies for Buell's army and depending for communication upon a long east and west line of badly broken railroad which was exposed at almost every point to frequent and destructive incursions of the enemy. Buell had asked to make Nashville his base instead. That point was connected with Louisville by rail and still more securely by river, and the river route was at all points adequately guarded against interruption by an effective gunboat fleet. From Nashville south and east there were railroads which Buell could have guarded effectually with one fifth the force necessary to the very ineffectual protection of the east and west line of the Memphis and Charleston road.

But Halleck was imperative in his orders and Buell had to submit, with the ultimate result of having to scatter his forces widely in order to guard both lines and repair both, on pain of bringing actual starvation upon his army.

The second mistake was in ordering Buell to repair the very badly damaged Memphis and Charleston railroad as he advanced. This, as we have already seen, resulted in so delaying his advance that Bragg reached Chattanooga first and was from that hour master of the situation.

In the meanwhile Forrest and Morgan were cease-

lessly active in Buell's rear—towards Louisville—harassing his detachments, threatening and at times destroying his communications, burning bridges, tearing up railroads, gathering recruits from the youth of Kentucky and Tennessee, throwing the people into panic and grave uncertainty of mind, and now and then defeating and capturing important forces. Thus at Tompkinsville, Kentucky, Morgan routed the Federal garrison under Major Jordan, and proceeding, destroyed the railroad at Lebanon Junction, and at Lebanon compelled the surrender of the force there with a large amount of supplies which Buell badly needed. Thence he raided all over central Kentucky, destroying railroads of the utmost importance to Buell and finally escaping with rich booty into the Confederate lines again.

Forrest pushed out from Chattanooga and undertook even larger operations. He assailed Murfreesborough on the thirteenth of July, carried the place by storm, captured the whole garrison, including its commander, General Crittenden, and, turning about, overcame and captured Colonel Lester on the Stone river, with his entire force of nine full companies.

These actions were not battles of any special consequence, of course. They are mentioned here merely as illustrations of the perplexities that beset General Buell in his march upon Chattanooga, and ultimately made a complete failure of the attempt. Such actions as those described were of daily occurrence, and they compelled General Buell not only to weaken his column by detachments sent to strengthen exposed positions, but still further to cripple himself

by sending columns of some importance to try conclusions with the very enterprising enemy.

Bragg, at the head of a strong Confederate army, established himself in Chattanooga on the twenty-ninth of July, some weeks before Buell could finish the reconstruction of the Memphis and Charleston railroad and advance to the point the occupation of which was the sole object of his campaign.

Bragg at once called to his aid all the troops that could be spared to him from points of less importance, and very soon he was at the head of a strong force which threatened a serious and dangerous invasion.

But while he was thus concentrating his forces for a vigorous aggressive movement, Bragg adroitly concealed his purposes. He so disposed his divisions as to leave Buell in utter uncertainty as to his intentions. It might be that he intended a reconquest of Nashville. It might be that his purpose was to march into eastern Kentucky. It might be that he intended to move northward, take Buell in flank and rear, destroy his communications, cut him off from assistance or retreat, and perhaps compel his surrender. His dispositions equally threatened each of these possible enterprises, without in the least degree impairing his ability instantly to concentrate his entire force for the execution of any one of them.

And what his force was Buell did not know and could not conjecture with any degree of confidence. East Tennessee was full of Union men eager to give helpful information to the Federal commander, but Bragg, with an adroitness that had not before been brought to bear upon campaigning in the west, man-

aged to conceal the strength of his army even from the citizens of Chattanooga, at the same time moving troops about in such fashion as to suggest half a dozen different and irreconcilable purposes. It thus happened that the more and the more positive information Buell received with regard to his enemy's operations and intentions, the more hopelessly was he bewildered. He dared not concentrate upon any line, lest his adversary should move at once by some other and put him in peril. No one can read General Buell's orders and dispatches written at that time without being strongly impressed with the hopeless confusion and uncertainty of his mind due to a situation that was perplexing in the extreme.

It was obvious that he must draw his widely scattered forces together at some point; but where? He could not concentrate them at any point upon the line or in the region he was supposed to be occupying without weakening all other points at grave risk of having his enemy turn his position and bring him to destruction. There was only one course that he could pursue with even tolerable prudence. That was to abandon his aggressive campaign, fall back, concentrate for defense and give battle at some point of his own selection much farther north.

Bragg's army consisted of five divisions of infantry with artillery and cavalry. Buell had five divisions in front and three others within almost instant call, while he could depend upon being still further reinforced from Louisville, whither a still further part of Grant's army had been sent. But the nature of the country in which Bragg lay, and the uncer-

tainty of his intentions forbade an attack upon him there.

Buell decided at last that his adversary's objective was Nashville, and on the thirtieth of August he gave orders for a retreat toward that place by way of Murfreesboro. At Murfreesboro he made no pause, as by that time Bragg's movement had developed his purpose to go into Kentucky and make a hurried advance upon Louisville, striking that city before Buell could come to its defense. Buell therefore abandoned his march towards Nashville and pushed his column northward by hurried marches, in the hope that he might beat Bragg in the race for the Ohio river, or failing in that, might be in time to fall upon his adversary's rear before he could establish himself in Louisville's defenses. He left a small garrison to hold Nashville but pushed forward in all haste with his main army, in retreat upon Louisville.

His retreat was embarrassed at every step. Bragg had forces ahead of him who destroyed bridges, tore up tracks, captured important supply depots, and in one case, at Mumfordsville, compelled the surrender —September 17—of a fortified town with its garrison, upon which Buell had somewhat depended for a reinforcement.

At first Buell had left Thomas at Nashville, to defend that city, but his own need of strength became so pressing that he called upon that able officer to join him with the greater part of the troops that had been left at Nashville.

What Bragg's campaign really meant, and what he hoped to accomplish by it may best be shown by

his own orders and dispatches. On August eleventh, soon after he had established himself at Chattanooga, he sent instructions to General Van Dorn who was confronting Grant at Corinth in which he said: "It is very desirable to press the enemy closely in West Tennessee. We learn their forces there are being rapidly reduced, and when our movements become known, it is certain they must throw forces into middle Tennessee and Kentucky, or lose those regions. If you hold them in check, we are sure of success here; but should they reinforce here so as to defy us, then you may redeem west Tennessee and probably aid us by crushing the enemy's rear."

On August 27, just as his army was got into vigorous motion, General Bragg wrote to Van Dorn again as follows: "We move from here immediately—later by some days than expected; but in time, we hope, for a successful campaign. Buell has certainly fallen back from the Memphis and Charleston railroad, and will probably not make a stand this side of Nashville, if there. He is now fortifying that place. General E. K. Smith, reinforced by two brigades from this army, has turned Cumberland Gap and is now marching on Lexington, Kentucky. General Morgan (Yankee) is thus cut off from all supplies. General Humphrey Marshall is to enter eastern Kentucky from western Virginia. We shall thus have Buell pretty well disposed of. Sherman and Rosecrans, we leave to you and Price, satisfied you can dispose of them, and we confidently hope to meet you upon the Ohio."

Two days later, on August 29, Bragg telegraphed

Price, saying: "Buell's force is in full retreat upon Nashville, destroying their stores. Watch Rosecrans and prevent a junction. Or, if he escapes, you follow him closely."

It will be seen from these dispatches that Bragg had no real thought of advancing upon Nashville, as Buell at first believed that he intended to do. His campaign was boldly planned for a larger conquest farther north, which, if he had been successful, would have left Nashville an easy prey to a strong detachment, if indeed it had failed to succumb to isolation and fall by its own weight.

In these brief communications we have a complete revelation of Bragg's plans and purposes—a complete setting forth of his hopes. Stripped of military technicalities his purpose was to push his army towards Louisville in advance of Buell's retreat; to strike and destroy the Federal general's line of railroad communication between Nashville and Louisville, at points north of Buell's march, thus impeding and delaying the Federal retreat and in Forrest's phrase "getting there first with the most men"— *there* meaning Louisville on the Ohio river.

In aid of this plan he had cut off the Federal general, Morgan, at Cumberland Gap, rendering his force useless for any aggressive purpose and incapable of joining Buell anywhere. He had ordered strong forces into eastern Kentucky, to hold there all the Federals in that quarter, to threaten Cincinnati and perhaps to compel the detachment of a considerable force from the garrison at Louisville for the defense of the Ohio city. He depended upon Price and

Van Dorn so to occupy Grant's badly depleted army in western Tennessee and northern Mississippi as to prevent it from moving to Buell's assistance, or should it so move, he expected his very energetic lieutenants to cripple it by a prompt pursuit and by vigorous blows struck upon its rear, in the meanwhile overrunning and reconquering the region lost in western Tennessee and Kentucky.

This was without doubt one of the most brilliantly planned operations of the entire war on either side. It looked to no less an achievement than the undoing of all that had been done by Grant and Buell and Thomas, the reconquest of all the region lost and the establishment of the Confederate lines upon the Ohio river for both offensive and defensive operations during the next year and the years to follow.

The one defect of the plan was that the Confederates had not force enough to carry it to success, except by some happy accident, and happy accidents were far less likely to happen in the autumn of 1862 than they had been a year earlier when troops were raw, generals totally inexperienced and the problems of war wholly unsolved even in their primary processes.

Bragg's force was considerably less than that which Buell had under his immediate command. Lee was at that time carrying on his tremendous campaigns in Virginia and Maryland so that no troops could be spared from that quarter to reinforce Bragg's undertaking. Price and Van Dorn had quite all they could do to hold their own against Grant at Corinth and Sherman at Memphis. It is true that Grant had been "stripped to the skin," as he expressed

it, by calls upon him to reinforce Buell and to spare division after division for the army that was contending against Lee and doubtfully defending the Federal capital. But on the other hand Price and Van Dorn had been stripped equally bare to furnish Bragg with the troops with whom he was invading Kentucky.

And while Bragg was thus marching into his enemy's country with a force only about three fifths as numerous as that of his adversary and with no prospect of important reinforcement from any quarter, Buell was retreating upon a city strongly held, whose garrison would furnish an instant and a very strong reinforcement, while the mere threat of Bragg's advance was inducing the hurrying of multitudes of fresh troops from all the northwestern states, to the menaced cities of Cincinnati and Louisville. For it was clearly seen in Ohio, Indiana and Illinois, and even in Michigan, Wisconsin and Minnesota, that should Bragg succeed in establishing himself on the Ohio river the states north of that stream must become the ravaged and trampled theater of the next year's campaign, with a Confederate invading force swelled by enlistments from Kentucky and Tennessee to enormous proportions and reinforced by the fifty or sixty thousand Southern veterans whom the conquest of the Ohio by Bragg would instantly release from defensive work farther south. In brief, if Bragg could have captured and held Louisville by defeating Buell, it was morally certain that the Confederates would have been able, during the following spring, to invade the Northwest

with an effective force of tremendous proportions. For Kentucky and Tennessee would in that case have become wholly Confederate, and the whole South would have joined in an effort to make decisive use of such an opportunity to end the war in triumph. Tens of thousands of seasoned troops employed during the summer of 1862 in garrisoning towns and protecting railroad lines would in that case have been set free to aid in an aggressive movement north of the Ohio. With the Confederates established at Louisville and holding the Ohio river as their line, there would have been no choice but for Grant to withdraw from Mississippi, West Tennessee and Kentucky, thus setting free not only the 30,000 or 50,000 men confronting his present position, but also the garrisons and armies about Vicksburg and along the several railroads in Mississippi and in northern Georgia and Alabama. It is certainly not an exaggeration to estimate that had Bragg succeeded, as he hoped, in seizing Louisville and meeting Van Dorn and Price "on the Ohio" as he said, the Confederates could and would have mustered at least 150,000 men for the invasion of the Northwest at the opening of the spring of 1863—an army greater than the South ever put into the field at any point during the entire continuance of the war.

And all this was a not impossible—indeed a not improbable—contingency. It is true that Bragg's force was in numbers inferior to Buell's in about the proportion of three to five. But it was massed at the outset and remained completely coöperating from beginning to end of the campaign. It had besides, the ad-

vantage of knowing what it intended and whither it was going, while Buell must vaguely guess its intentions and hold himself ready during a retreat, to meet his enemy wherever that enemy might see fit to strike.

In war these things offset superiority of numbers in a degree which it is difficult for the civilian reader to understand. He who can give battle or refuse it where he pleases, has a very great advantage over his adversary who must accept whatever is offered or else retreat at disadvantage.

Moreover Bragg had managed to get the start of Buell in their race for Louisville, and this advantage had been greatly increased by his success in breaking Buell's lines of march by burning bridges, tearing up railroads and capturing supply depots. For a time it seemed more than probable that Bragg would reach Louisville and occupy it before Buell could by any possibility get there. In that event Buell would have been cut off from all supplies, and only ordinary vigilance on the part of the Confederates would have been necessary to starve him into surrender—for if thus cut off, his stores could not have supported his army for more than three or four days at the utmost.

Still again, Bragg had another ground of hope. It often happens in war, that a smaller force, skilfully handled, masters a larger force. To go no further back than the Seven Days' battles around Richmond, and the campaign following, Lee had succeeded by the skilful handling of a comparatively small force in overcoming one army which greatly outnumbered his own, while paralyzing the purpose of other forces

as great as his own, that had been sent to reinforce his enemy. With this and many other familiar illustrations of the possibility of achieving conspicuous military success against superior numbers present to his mind, it was not vainglorious on the part of Bragg, who believed in his own skill, to hope that if he could reach Louisville in advance of Buell, his army, inspirited by repeated successes on the march, and holding the vantage ground of possession, might successfully meet and defeat Buell's way-weary force, cut off, as in that case it would have been, from its objective, from all hope of assistance and even from very badly needed supplies.

Indeed, had Bragg achieved his purpose of pushing his columns into Louisville in advance of Buell's coming, it would have been almost a miracle for him to have failed in his resistance to the outmarched Federal commander's attempts to recapture the lost stronghold.

It was one of those fearful crises of the war,—like Sharpsburg and Gettysburg—in which the whole outcome of the struggle hung trembling in the balance, and the future alike of the Union and of the Confederacy was risked, as it were, upon the hazard of a die.

For while Bragg was thus dragging Buell back from northern Alabama and Georgia to the Ohio river and more than seriously threatening to make of that river the fortified frontier of the Confederacy, Lee was in Maryland, after having overthrown McClellan before Richmond and Pope at Manassas, and the National capital itself seemed in sore danger of

capture. The year which had opened with the Union victories at Forts Henry and Donelson, presently followed by Grant's success at Shiloh, while McClellan's overwhelming divisions were near enough to Richmond to see the spires of that city's churches, seemed about to draw to a close so disastrous to the Federal cause as to leave it in worse case than at the beginning of the war or indeed at any time since the first defeat at Bull Run.

The National credit was impaired as it never had been before. The Confederates were moved to make of the eighteenth of September a day of Thanksgiving for a deliverance which they regarded as in effect accomplished.

Enlistments at the North had so far fallen off that drafts must be made in order to maintain that great superiority of numbers without which the North, fighting aggressively, could not hope to make head against Southern defense, as all the operations of the war up to that time had shown, and as the later course of the contest additionally proved at every point.

But Bragg's effort to seize Louisville before Buell could throw himself into that city's defenses, failed of its purpose. By virtue of a wonderful march Buell reached the city first, near the end of September, the last of his forces arriving there on the twenty-ninth. Bragg was at Bardstown, not far away and in a very threatening position. In the meanwhile Grant held his own at Corinth in spite of the dangerous depletion of his forces, and the whole of West Tennessee remained in possession of the Federals.

Buell found heavy reinforcements awaiting him

at Louisville, while Bragg at Bardstown had not yet been joined, as he had expected to be, by Kirby Smith's force from eastern Kentucky.

The conditions of the campaign were thus reversed. Buell, who had been on the defensive and in enforced retreat, was able now to take the offensive, while Bragg, who had been advancing with high hopes was now in a position from which he must retreat promptly on pain of having his army overwhelmed and destroyed.

Buell quickly reorganized his army into corps, welding the raw troops into the seasoned force, and within a day or two he was ready to assail the enemy who had driven him across two states.

Bragg retired to Perryville with a total force of about 35,000 men, and Buell with 58,000 advanced upon him. On the eighth of October a severe battle occurred which lasted from noonday to night and seemed undecided when night fell. But when morning came Bragg had retired and was in slow and orderly retreat southward. The Federal loss in the battle of Perryville was reported at 4,348, including two brigadier generals killed. The Confederate loss is unknown, but as Bragg began the battle with only three divisions assailing eight, and as the fighting at times was muzzle to muzzle, the slaughter among such troops as were actually engaged on his side, must have been terrible.

Learning that Kirby Smith's command had on that evening joined Bragg, General Buell did not press his enemy, but disposed his forces for a defensive battle. It was not until the thirteenth that he dis-

covered that Bragg was indeed retreating and ordered a pursuit. This was pressed, with some fighting now and then, as far as Crab Orchard, where the Federals halted, leaving Bragg free to make his leisurely way to East Tennessee with an enormous wagon train loaded with a rich booty of supplies which he had gathered in Kentucky.

CHAPTER XXXVI

Fall and Winter Campaigns at the West and South

The climatic conditions of the disputed country south and west were excellent for campaigning during the autumn, and tolerable during most of the winter. As neither side was satisfied with the results achieved in that quarter during the spring and summer of 1862, both were disposed to carry on the war with vigor during the autumn of that year and the winter following.

On the third of October, while Buell and Bragg were confronting each other near Louisville, Van Dorn, who had been heavily reinforced from Missouri, undertook to carry out Bragg's orders, for the capture of Corinth and the reconquest of western Tennessee and Kentucky. He advanced upon Corinth in force and assailed Rosecrans, who held the immediate command of that place, upon lines chosen by the Federal commander, three miles in front of the main defenses.

It was a rich prize that the Confederate commander battled for, and right manfully did he strive to gain it. Corinth at that time was a depot of supplies of unusual consequence, and besides that, its conquest would mean the complete breaking of Grant's long and difficult line of defense.

During the first day of terrific fighting, Van Dorn succeeded in driving Rosecrans back to the refuge of the town's fortifications. On the next morning he assailed the works with extraordinary vigor and determination. His men suffered terribly from the cannon and musketry fire of a protected enemy at short range, but they succeeded at last in breaking the defenses and forcing their way into the town where they fought inch by inch through the streets. For a time it seemed certain that they must succeed not only in carrying the town and capturing the stores that had been collected there, but also in compelling the surrender of the defending force, twenty thousand strong, with the multitude of large guns mounted upon the works. But reinforcements came to Rosecrans's aid at the critical moment and turned the tide of battle just in time to prevent a great disaster to the Federals. The Confederates were driven back and after a heavy loss, never accurately reported, they retreated from the place.

Grant had ordered Rosecrans, should this occur, to pursue with all his force and crush the Confederate column completely. Rosecrans delayed even the beginning of pursuit from noon, when the retreat began, until the morning of the next day and then, by a mistake in the road taken, lost even the little chance left to him of effective pursuit.

Grant was sorely displeased with this loss of an opportunity which had been purchased at cost of so severe a battle, and at his request Rosecrans was removed to another field. He was sent in fact, after a brief time, to succeed Buell, whose failure to do

greater damage to Bragg met with condemnation at Washington.

The Confederate authorities were equally displeased with their general, Van Dorn, and soon afterwards he was superseded in command by General John C. Pemberton.

Pemberton was a Pennsylvanian by birth, who had married at the South. He was a special, personal favorite of President Davis. He had never commanded an army or conducted a battle in his life, yet Mr. Davis had rapidly promoted him all the way from colonel to lieutenant general, over the heads and to the great discouragement of colonels, brigadiers and major generals who had won high distinction upon hotly contested Confederate battlefields. And now, when the Federal forces were firmly established on the far Southern line of the Memphis and Charleston railroad, and when the very greatest generalship was obviously and peremptorily needed to save the Confederate cause in the South and West, the Richmond authorities selected this favorite, who had done no fighting, commanded no armies and manifested no military ability, to take control of Confederate defense at the most critical point of all.

The result was quite what might have been expected. Pemberton was badly defeated every time he gave battle and it was he who surrendered Vicksburg and the Mississippi river on the fourth of July after a brave but incapable defense. The history of that belongs to a later chapter. And even after this extraordinary demonstration of his unfitness and incapacity, and at a time when very many at the South seri-

ously—though unjustly—suspected him of having deliberately betrayed their cause, Mr. Davis appointed this man to a post which seemed at least to give him authority to control General Lee himself. This latter appointment was so quickly and so hotly resented by an army that well nigh worshiped Lee, that Mr. Davis wisely modified it before it had time to provoke a protest that might have savored of mutiny.

When Rosecrans superseded Buell, on October 30, 1862, the Federal army was in process of concentration at and near Bowling Green. Within a few days the concentration was complete, and Rosecrans was ready for active campaigning with a great army, inspirited by recent successes, strongly reinforced, effectively reorganized and full of hopeful determination.

But in what direction to advance was an unsettled problem. Rosecrans was strongly urged from Washington to move at once into East Tennessee, threatening Chattanooga and giving encouragement to the Unionists in that quarter. But Nashville was in serious danger. It had been held by a comparatively meager garrison during the Perryville campaign, against a strong Confederate force under Breckinridge, and there was more than a chance that Breckinridge might now capture the position unless Negley, with the two divisions under his command there, could be promptly supported. The importance of Nashville to the Federal armies as a secondary base of supplies was very great. Whether Rosecrans should campaign to the east, west or south, his need of depots at Nashville must be imperative.

While he was pondering the question of an objective, Bragg settled it for him. The Confederate general had retired from Kentucky rather of his own choice than under compulsion. He had suffered no disaster. At Perryville indeed he had had the best of the fighting for a large part of the day, and he had retired in the night rather with the purpose of giving battle again at some more favorable point than with intent to avoid battle with an enemy in strongly superior force. That enemy had not seen fit to follow and press him, and so there had been no further trial of conclusions. The Confederates had indeed failed to capture Louisville and establish themselves on the Ohio, but they had met with so much success not only in the various actions fought but also in demonstrating their ability to advance or retreat at will, that they came out of the campaign feeling themselves, in effect, victors. They were full of spirit and eagerly ready for further campaigning.

With his army in this mood and with a secure base behind him at Chattanooga, Bragg promptly moved upon Murfreesboro, with manifest intent to join Breckinridge and carry Nashville with a rush, if Rosecrans should fail to succor that strategic key to the situation.

Murfreesboro lies on the Nashville and Chattanooga railroad, a scant forty miles southeast of Nashville. The country between is open and so completely unobstructed by physical features of difficulty, that the railroad shows scarcely a curve in its course between the two points.

In view of Bragg's advance there was but one

course open to Rosecrans. He must strengthen the defenses of Nashville and concentrate there for defensive and offensive operations.

He promptly threw a strong force into Nashville and soon his entire army was concentrated there, except such detachments—and these were large—as were employed in rebuilding the railroad between Louisville and Nashville, which the Confederates had destroyed, and those other and still larger detachments which were necessary to defend that vitally important line of communication against the ceaseless activity of Forrest and Morgan, who were making themselves destructively ubiquitous.

Rosecrans's activity was such that he succeeded in rendering Nashville secure before Bragg could carry out his purpose of assailing that stronghold. Still Bragg did not despair of his purpose. He sent peremptory orders to the forces around Corinth, either to send him strong reinforcements or to carry on such a campaign in their own districts as should compel Rosecrans to weaken himself at Nashville by sending heavy reinforcements to the west.

Meanwhile Bragg fortified himself at Murfreesboro, establishing his lines along and across Stone river—a little, easily fordable stream—about two miles in front of the town.

Rosecrans decided to assail him there, and to that end advanced with 47,000 men. His march began on the twenty-sixth of December, and by the thirtieth he was in position to assail his enemy with an effective force of 43,700 men. His plan of battle was to throw forward his left wing in force, envelope his enemy's

right and crumple up his lines by pushing into action a ceaseless stream of fresh troops, wheeling his divisions to the right as they should be successively brought into action.

But Bragg was also an officer of great energy and activity, and he had under his command a force nearly if not quite equal to that of his foe. He was at disadvantage during Rosecrans's sudden and unexpected advance from Nashville, from the fact that he had sent away his cavalry under Wheeler, Forrest, and Morgan to assail Rosecrans's communications at a time when that general was not expected to take the initiative in a winter campaign in the field. But now that Rosecrans was in his front, and obviously intending immediate battle, Bragg in his turn determined to assume the aggressive and himself bring on the action. His plan was absolutely identical with that of Rosecrans, namely to push forward his left wing, envelope and crush his enemy's right and by successive right wheels to destroy his foe or drive him into retreat. Thus Rosecrans intended to begin the battle at one end of the line while Bragg meant to begin it at the other.

Each of course massed his forces at the point where he purposed to make his first assault, and each thus weakened his line at the point which his enemy was planning to assail.

As a consequence the initiatory advantage must of necessity lie with the force that should succeed in making itself the first aggressor, bringing on the battle before the other was ready and striking the other's weakest wing with his own strongest divisions.

That advantage fell to Bragg as a reward for his alertness in striking as soon as possible after dawn on the last day of the year. He had so extended his left as completely to overlap Rosecrans's right and he fell upon it in flank with resistless impetuosity. The force defending it was quickly crushed and the Confederates, advancing with enthusiasm, bent back the next division encountered, and after some strenuous fighting, forced it to retire upon a new line which Rosecrans had hastily established at right angles to that of the morning.

The fighting continued with desperate determination and great slaughter on both sides until nightfall. The advantage was conspicuously with the Confederates, though there was no decisive victory won. Rosecrans had held his position indeed, upon a part of his line, and had not been either destroyed or forced into retreat. But the Confederates had driven him from one half or more of the ground that he had held at the beginning of the battle, had captured twenty-eight of his guns and large numbers of prisoners, while their cavalry had marched entirely around him and fallen upon his communications in a way that very seriously threatened him with an isolation that must have involved his destruction.

Rosecrans had been badly worsted in battle, but he was not yet beaten. His army was not demoralized, and his own determination was not impaired. He took account of his ammunition, sent detachments to protect his communications, and resolved to hold his position and renew the battle on the following day, either as the assailant of his enemy or as the assaulted, as circumstances might determine.

But the next day was passed in inaction on both sides, and it was not until the second of January, 1863, that the battle was renewed. Even then it was renewed only in part and obviously with no disposition on either side to bring on a general engagement. Nevertheless there was very bloody fighting on the part of the detachments engaged, in which the Confederate general, Breckinridge, becoming involved and being subjected to a concentrated artillery fire at short range, lost nearly two thousand men.

Two days later and after desultory fighting, General Bragg abandoned his position at Murfreesboro and retired to Duck river, where he fortified. He reported his losses in this battle—which is variously known as Murfreesboro, and Stone river—at 10,000 men, and declared that he had taken 6,000 prisoners. He had also captured thirty guns and lost three. On the other hand, General Rosecrans reported a loss of 8,778 in killed and wounded, and about 2,800 in prisoners lost to the enemy—a total of somewhat less than 11,000. The two reports are hopelessly at variance and irreconcilable, as to the number of prisoners taken, as was usually the case with the reports of battle losses at that period of the war. They were usually inaccurate and never trustworthy, as every historian who has honestly tried to find out the truth has learned to his annoyance.

But whatever the exact losses were on either side, they were far greater than were those of many more famous battles, and about as great as those of the battles commonly accounted as of superior proportions. Thus the loss admitted by the Confederates

at Murfreesboro out of a force of about 35,000 or 40,000 men, was nearly twice that which Lee, with a force of 68,000, suffered at Fredericksburg; while the admitted Federal loss at Murfreesboro, where the army numbered 43,700 men, was very nearly as great as that sustained by Burnside's army of 120,000 at Fredericksburg, including the fearful slaughter in the six terrible assaults upon Marye's Heights.

Obviously the battle of Murfreesboro must be accounted one of the bloodiest struggles of the war, as well as one of the most heroically contested on both sides. Its indecisiveness has been very interestingly summed up by General Van Horne in his "History of the Army of the Cumberland" as follows:

> Neither army commander had fully executed his plan of battle, although General Bragg had approached very nearly the completion of his. He had turned a flank of the National army, bent back the right to the rear of the center, but had failed to turn its left or reach its rear, and hence had not gained the extreme advantages which he had anticipated in assuming the offensive and [which he] had seemingly attained at the grand crisis of the battle. He had assaulted boldly and persistently from first to last, but had completely exhausted his army without gaining a decisive victory. General Rosecrans had fought a battle radically different from the one he had proposed for himself. Instead of turning the right of the Confederate army and taking its center in reverse, according to his plan, he had been forced into the most emphatic straits in maintaining the defensive from flank to flank. Both commanders had lost heavily; General Bragg by continuous assaults with massed forces, and General Rosecrans by resistance at each point to superior numbers, and by frequent recessions under the guns of the enemy. . . . A battle whose emergencies of offense and defense involves the use of all reserves, must necessarily be a bloody one.

It is seldom that an engagement of such dimensions has left two commanding generals so much in doubt as to the course that either would adopt, and hence each determined to await developments, and each was ignorant of the purpose of the other. Of the two General Bragg was the more hopeful.

In the end, as we have seen, both armies fell back and fortified, and campaigning ended in the southwest for that season.

Other events of that winter may be briefly summarized.

Mr. Lincoln's emancipation proclamation became effective on the first of January.

The Confederate Congress passed a second conscription bill in February extending age limits both ways and putting practically every able-bodied white man in the South into the army.

The Federal Congress, on the third of March, authorized the suspension of the writ of habeas corpus, thus virtually establishing martial law throughout the North.

A Confederate loan of $3,000,000 was promptly subscribed for in Europe.

On the seventh of April the fleet off Charleston assailed the defenses of that city, but was beaten off with the loss of one ironclad, the monitor, Keokuk, sunk.

CHAPTER XXXVII

The Chancellorsville Campaign

However important the operations at the West and South might be, the vital seat of the war was always in Virginia.

There the contending armies ceaselessly threatened the two capitals, the conquest of either of which would have been decisive. There both sides concentrated their best armies. There was present the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia under Lee, of which General Hooker, after being overthrown and beaten by it, testified: "That army has, by discipline alone, acquired a character for steadiness and efficiency, unsurpassed, in my judgment, in ancient or modern times. We have not been able to rival it nor has there been any near approximation to it in the other rebel armies."

And there on the other side was present for duty that Army of the Potomac which had so distinguished itself for heroic devotion and unfaltering courage upon a score of desperately contested battlefields.

After Burnside's bloody defeat at Fredericksburg the authorities at Washington proceeded to swell the Army of the Potomac to vast proportions until as the spring of 1863 approached, its total was no less than 180,000 men and 400 guns.[1]

[1] These are the figures given by Col. Theodore A. Dodge, U. S. A., in his singularly able monograph on "The Campaign of Chancellorsville," pages 2 and 19.

Meanwhile operations below Richmond had compelled Lee to detach about one fourth of his force, thus reducing his strength to a total of 58,100 men and 170 pieces of artillery.

There was one important difference, however. In Lee the Southerners had found their very ablest commander, a master of all the arts of war, and an absolute master of the hearts of all the men who served under his command.

The Army of the Potomac had been commanded in succession by McDowell, McClellan, Pope, McClellan again, and Burnside, no one of whom had manifested an ability to contend successfully with Lee, even with the unstinted resources given into the hands of each. The Army of the Potomac still lacked a capable commander and the lack was for long a determining factor of the problem.

Colonel Dodge, an officer of the United States army, and a historian of exquisite conscientiousness and high repute, puts the matter in these words:

> Great as was the importance of success in Virginia, the Confederates had appreciated the fact as had not the political soldiers at the head of the Federal Department of War. *Our resources always enabled us to keep more men, and more and better material, on this battle ground* than the Confederates could do; but this strength *was constantly offset by the ability of the Southern generals*[1] and their independence of action as opposed to the frequent unskilfulness of ours, who were not only never long in command, but were then tied hand and foot to some ideal plan for insuring the safety of Washington.

[1] Italics ours. AUTHOR.

No impartial student of the history of the war can doubt that Colonel Dodge here touches the very marrow of the matter. In the operations in Virginia the North had more men, often by two or three to one, more guns and incalculably better supply departments. Their men were as good as the Southerners. Their guns were better, and their materials immeasurably superior both in quantity and quality. But until Grant was summoned from the West in 1864 to take command, the Army of the Potomac was commanded by no general who had capacity enough to make effective use of these superior advantages in a contest of strategic wits with Lee.

The real problem which the Washington authorities were set to solve was to find a general equal to this task, and so long as Halleck remained commander in chief of the Federal forces, there was no hope of success in that search. Commander after commander had been set up only to be promptly and disastrously bowled down again by Lee, in spite of the enormous disparity of numbers, guns and equipment.

But neither Grant nor Sherman was among those who had been appointed to try conclusions with Lee.

Halleck was still supreme as the military counselor of Mr. Lincoln. Grant, in spite of his victories, was a peculiarly objectionable person to him, and Sherman labored under the serious disability of enjoying Grant's favor and esteem in a very high degree.

But after Burnside's failure it was necessary to find a new commander for the Army of the Potomac, and Mr. Lincoln selected General Joseph Hooker to make the next attempt.

General Hooker was an old army officer. He was thoroughly equipped so far as military education was concerned, and he was so ardent in the work of the soldier that his men had lovingly nicknamed him "Fighting Joe Hooker." But he had never commanded an army or planned a campaign. He had made the last and most brilliant of that series of heroic charges up Marye's Heights which Burnside had so foolishly ordered at Fredericksburg. He had made the charge under protest, correctly deeming it a needless sacrifice of men's lives in a hopeless undertaking. But he had made it with extraordinary gallantry and had persisted in it until, as he sarcastically said, "he thought he had lost as many men as he was ordered to lose."

Of his devotion as a soldier, and of his unusual capacity in subordinate command, he had given adequate proof in every battle in which the Army of the Potomac had been engaged, from Manassas to Fredericksburg. But his capacity to lead a great army against a great enemy was wholly conjectural. Mr. Lincoln suggested this in the extraordinary letter in which he announced to Hooker his selection for this supreme trust. That letter was as follows:

Executive Mansion, Washington,
D. C., January 26, 1863

Major-General Hooker:

General:—I have placed you at the head of the Army of the Potomac. Of course I have done this upon what appears to me to be sufficient reasons, and yet I think it best for you to know that there are some things in regard to which I am not quite satisfied with you. I believe you to be a brave and skilful soldier, which of course I like. I also

believe you do not mix politics with your profession, in which you are right. You have confidence in yourself; which is a valuable if not an indispensable quality. You are ambitious, which, within reasonable bounds, does good rather than harm; but I think that during General Burnside's command of the army, you have taken counsel of your ambition, and thwarted him as much as you could, in which you did a great wrong to the country and to a most meritorious and honorable brother officer. I have heard, in such a way as to believe it, of your recently saying that both the army and the government needed a dictator. Of course it was not for this but in spite of it, that I have given you the command. Only those Generals who gain success can set up dictators. What I now ask of you is military success, and I will risk the dictatorship. The government will support you to the utmost of its ability, which is neither more nor less than it has done or will do for all commanders. I much fear that the spirit you have aided to infuse into the army, of criticizing their commander and withholding confidence from him, will now turn upon you. I shall assist you as far as I can to put it down. Neither you nor Napoleon, if he were alive again, could get any good out of an army while such a spirit prevails in it. And now, beware of rashness. Beware of rashness, but with energy and sleepless vigilance go forward and give us victories.

Yours very truly,

A. Lincoln.

Thus commissioned, Hooker undertook the task in which so many predecessors had failed—the task of overcoming Lee, breaking the resisting power of his really wonderful Army of Northern Virginia, conquering the Confederate capital and adding Virginia, with her pith and substance, to the list of states reconquered to the Union.

For this task he had more adequate means than any of his predecessors or even any of his successors en-

joyed until Grant, in 1864, concentrated the whole military force of the nation and coördinated all its operations with this one object in view.

Hooker had an army of 180,000 men, to Lee's less than 60,000—about three men to one. He had 400 pieces of artillery to Lee's 170, and both his guns and his ammunition were superior to Lee's. He had unsurpassed quartermaster and commissary departments, a matter in which Lee was wofully deficient. The railroads in Hooker's rear were in excellent condition, while those upon which his adversary must depend were well-nigh hopeless wrecks, with nearly helpless engines and a lamentable insufficiency of cars. Still further, the Northern army was filled with skilled mechanicians and practical engineers capable of quickly meeting and overcoming any mechanical difficulty that might arise. In one case early in the war it is related that an engine in Federal service ran off the track and was badly damaged, thus threatening serious embarrassment to a military movement. When the question arose as to what could be done with the crippled engine, a private stepped from the ranks, saluted respectfully, and said: "I built that engine. I guess I can repair her."

The South had next to none of this sort of resource. Nor had it anywhere great shops capable of producing machinery. The South had been an almost exclusively agricultural country, in which the mechanic arts were scarcely at all developed.

With such advantages and others of scarcely less importance, it seemed a not very difficult task for Hooker so to employ the 180,000 hardened veterans

of the Army of the Potomac as to overcome the resistance of the 58,100 composing the Army of Northern Virginia. The Government at Washington expected nothing less than this. The people of the North demanded such results as their right. The army itself stood eagerly ready to do the work required, for the Army of the Potomac believed in Hooker as it had not previously believed in any of its commanders except McClellan before that general's career was clouded by defeat. The men had seen Hooker fight. They were in love with his rough and ready ways. They repeated around their camp fires his witty sayings, and mightily rejoiced in them. They had indeed none of that filial reverence for him which the men of the Army of Northern Virginia felt for Lee—whom they affectionately called "Mas' Bob." But they had for Hooker an almost boyish enthusiasm which was without doubt an important element of strength.

Hooker began right. He was a master of the art of military organization, and he quickly brought the army under his command into a state of positively wonderful efficiency. Then he planned a brilliant campaign—a campaign far better conceived than any that Lee had yet been called upon to meet.

Fully recognizing his own superiority in numbers, in guns, in equipment, in supplies, in the materials of war and in that mobility which such superiority necessarily gives, he planned to utilize all these advantages for the certain and quick destruction of his adversary.

He could force the fighting when and where he

pleased. He could choose his own battlefields and his own time for action.

He had no thought of repeating Burnside's blunder and assailing Lee in his own chosen and strongly fortified position, at Fredericksburg. It was his intention instead to force Lee out of his fortifications and compel him to fight against tremendous odds in the open field.

His plan was, with enormously superior numbers to turn both of Lee's flanks at once, compel the division of his already inferior army, overcome both wings of it in detail, and crush it completely. That done, Confederate resistance in Virginia would be at an end. Richmond would lie before him a helpless prey. Virginia would be a conquered state, and the completion of the war a mere matter of detail.

All military critics who have considered the subject, agree that this was the best planned campaign that any Northern general had as yet originated and that its promise of success, with the great superiority of means behind it, amounted almost to a certainty. Its failure in the end was disastrous in the extreme and discouraging beyond anything that had occurred since the first battle of Manassas.

These facts taken together—the brilliancy and the entire soundness of the plan of campaign, the stupendous superadequacy of the means at command for carrying it to success, and its conspicuous failure in the end—render the history of the campaign of Chancellorsville one of the most dramatic of the wonder stories of the Confederate war.

After three months of most intelligent and ener-

getic work in perfecting organization and bringing all parts of the service into the highest condition of efficiency, Hooker was ready at last to begin his campaign. Omitting all the sick, all detachments, all forces sent to guard communications, all furloughed officers and men, he had "for duty equipped," according to his morning reports, no less than 131,491 men, with 400 pieces of highly effective artillery. Opposed to him was Lee with a total force, of all arms, of 58,100 men, of whom less than 50,000 were ready for duty, and about 170 pieces of artillery, mostly of an inferior sort. Some small reinforcements are believed to have come to Lee, swelling his force to about 60,000 men all told, or perhaps 55,000 effectives.

With numbers so overwhelming, Hooker was free to do pretty nearly whatever he might choose to do without risk of weakening himself at any point below the strength of his enemy.

His plan of campaign was simple and strategically admirable. Broadly stated it was this:

1. To push a strong force of cavalry, under Stoneman, around Lee's left and into his rear, to destroy his communications, and to harass and prevent his retreat towards Richmond—for Hooker's plans looked to nothing less than the capture of the whole Army of Northern Virginia.

2. To send a strong force of artillery and infantry under Sedgwick down the river to cross there, turn Lee's right, force whatever might be left of his army, by that time, out of their entrenchments, and mercilessly assail him in flank on his expected retreat toward Richmond, thus additionally making his surrender inevitable.

3. At the same time to march up the river with the main body of the Federal army, estimated by Lieutenant Colonel Theodore A. Dodge, U. S. A., at 120,000 men, push the head of his column across the stream far up it, sweep down the southern bank, clear the several fords in succession and at each to send fresh columns across; then, in irresistible force to march through the Wilderness, as that tangled country is called, and emerge from it in appallingly overwhelming numbers at Chancellorsville.

This would completely turn Lee's left with the main army and force him either to retreat hurriedly toward Richmond with Sedgwick on his flank, or to give battle in the open, with utterly inadequate forces.

Never during the whole course of the war was there a campaign more brilliantly planned than this one was to compel victory; never did one fail more conspicuously. Never were the advantages of the assailant so great; never were they so completely offset by the genius of the defending commander and the resolution of an army vastly inferior in numbers and in the appliances of war,—in every element of strength indeed except high soldierliness.

Stoneman moved on the thirteenth of April. His orders were to pass up the river, keeping well out of sight and masking his movement, to wheel suddenly and cross the stream at a point west of the Orange and Alexandria railroad, destroy Fitzhugh Lee's cavalry at Culpeper, seize upon Gordonsville, where the Orange and Alexandria and the Virginia Central railroads form a junction; push on toward Richmond; cut the Richmond and Fredericksburg railroad at

Hanover Junction, thus cutting off Lee's retreat; fortify himself there in strong positions and obstinately oppose any effort of Lee to retreat, until Hooker, moving from Lee's left and Sedgwick, moving from his right, should join forces with Stoneman and complete the work of destroying the Army of Northern Virginia. This culmination of the campaign was planned to occur six days after Stoneman's start.

Stoneman made the first failure. He moved up the river and crossed a part of his force. But high water soon afterwards rendered the stream unfordable, while Lee's alert cavalry lieutenant J. E. B. Stuart, confronted the force already crossed, and compelled it to retreat by swimming to escape certain destruction.

This ended the cavalry part of Hooker's program. For the ford did not become passable again until the twenty-seventh and by that time the main movement had been begun. It was too late for Stoneman to do his part of the work.

In the meanwhile the crossings at and near Port Royal, about twenty miles below Fredericksburg, had been secured, and bridges had been laid. On the twenty-ninth of April, early in the morning—before daylight in fact,—General Sedgwick forced a crossing with three corps. In preparation for this, ninety-eight guns had been previously placed in position under Hooker's direction and a number more held in reserve.

Sedgwick's orders were to seize a principal road, turn Lee's right flank, and in case of serious opposi-

tion, to carry Lee's works at all costs; then to push forward on Lee's flank and harass his retreat. It was expected that Stoneman would by this time be fortified in the way of Lee's retreat, and that the main body of the Federal army under Hooker, moving from Chancellorsville, would fall upon the Confederates and crush them.

With these dispositions made, Hooker moved up the Rappahannock and the Rapidan, crossed forces at the upper fords, moved thence down the right or Confederate bank of the stream, uncovering the several fords in succession, and crossing heavy forces at each.

Once across the Rapidan he moved his army rapidly through the Wilderness, to Chancellorsville, a solitary plantation house near the Southern edge of that vast thicket.

In posting himself at Chancellorsville Hooker had placed his army far to the rear of Lee's left at Fredericksburg. It was obvious that Lee must quit his entrenchments and move southwest to meet his adversary at Chancellorsville, otherwise his army would be completely cut off, overwhelmed and conquered, and the road to Richmond would be opened to his adversary with no possibility of effective resistance anywhere.

But Lee had not been asleep. Neither was he appalled by the enormous advantages of numbers, guns and position enjoyed by his adversary.

With that calm self-possession which was the keynote of his character; with that masterful skill in the art of war which had so often served him in lieu of

heavy battalions, and which then and since has commanded the admiration of military men both north and south; and, above all, with that confidence in the superb endurance of his veterans which their conduct on many fields had taught him to feel, he set to work to meet and defeat Hooker's admirably planned campaign.

He left 8,500 men and thirty guns to hold the works at Fredericksburg, so long as they could be held against Sedgwick's 30,000 men and more than 100 guns. With the remainder of his army,—in round numbers about 45,000 men,—he quickly moved to Chancellorsville to meet Hooker with his tremendously superior force.

The great Confederate had by this time completely penetrated Hooker's plan of campaign. He had no idea that the 8,500 men left in the works at and below Fredericksburg could for long hold that position against Sedgwick's superior force, but he knew the quality of the men set to that task, and he confidently reckoned that they would make such resistance—as in fact they did—as to prevent Sedgwick from forming a junction with the main army at Chancellorsville, until the struggle there should be ended.

And what a struggle it promised to be! Lee knew that at most he could hope for nothing better than to oppose one man to Hooker's three but even against such odds he decided to risk battle in the open rather than attempt a hazardous and dispiriting retreat to the defenses of Richmond.

Cautiously but rapidly, he transferred his army to Chancellorsville and after baffling various Federal

attempts to strike at his stores and communications, he concentrated in Hooker's front quite all that he could of his scanty force.

By this time Hooker's ceaseless activity had uncovered all the fords above Fredericksburg, and opened short and easy lines of communication, through Falmouth opposite Fredericksburg, between Sedgwick, operating on the east of Fredericksburg, and Hooker's headquarters near Chancellorsville on the southwest. Thus the two temporarily divided wings of Hooker's army were brought again into touch with each other and the whole vast force acted as a unit under Hooker's command, while its disposition was such as to compel Lee to divide his much smaller force in preparation for the expected determined assault of the Federals upon one or the other of two faces—he could not know which.

But it was not Lee's purpose long to await attack. His all-daring thought was to become himself the assailant as soon as he could get his army corps disposed in positions favorable to such a purpose.

He first selected a strong defensive position in front of Chancellorsville and hurriedly fortified it as a means of holding Hooker in check until he should himself be ready to take the offensive.

In the meanwhile, as his orders issued at that time clearly show, Hooker regarded his campaign as already completely successful. He had succeeded in so enveloping Lee that that general, according to all the rules of the war game must surrender either after a show of fighting or without that bloody preliminary.

In these calculations Hooker had not sufficiently

reckoned upon Lee's resourcefulness or his daring, or the fighting qualities of the Army of Northern Virginia. All these were factors underestimated in his statement of the equation.

The position at Chancellorsville itself was a conspicuously bad one for the Federals if they should stand on the defensive, and Hooker, seeing this, pushed his forces forward to more advantageous ground, a movement which involved a good deal of fighting in a comparatively small way, for the Confederates not only resisted stoutly but manifested a fiercely aggressive disposition wherever opportunity offered for a fight.

For reasons that have never been disclosed Hooker after a time withdrew his advance columns to their old unfavorable position at Chancellorsville and awaited his opportunity. His force was so greatly superior to that of his adversary that there seemed no risk in doing this, although it sacrificed a distinct advantage. It was obvious that if Lee should make a front attack he must be beaten off and crushed while, with his already inferior force, it would be simple madness, Hooker thought, for his opponent to divide his army and attempt any flank movement against an army outnumbering his own by three to one.

That madness Lee deliberately adopted as his strategy, and he carried it to a conclusion that must always be an astonishment to the reader of history.

Hooker's extraordinary retirement from the front of an enemy whom he had come out for the express purpose of attacking in overwhelming force, has al-

ways been inexplicable. Why he shrank from the attack after seeking opportunity for it with so much energy and skill it is impossible to understand. Why he abandoned his offensive operation just as its culmination in victory seemed certain, and, with enormously superior forces under his command fell back and assumed the defensive in an unfavorable position, even he seems never to have been able to explain. The most masterful critic and historian who has written of this campaign, says:

> At this point Hooker faltered. Fighting Joe had reached the culminating desire of his life. He had come face to face with his foe, and he had a hundred and twenty thousand eager and well-disciplined men at his back. He had come to fight and he retreated without crossing swords.[1]

This was the situation: Lee had had 59,000 men at Fredericksburg. He had left 8,500 of them there and had made other compulsory detachments which reduced his fighting force in front of Hooker to no more than 39,000. He confronted Hooker, who had 120,000 securely intrenched with 11,000 or 12,000 more within reach. Obviously Lee could not hope by direct assault to carry the works and conquer a force so overwhelming. Equally he could not hope to stand on the defensive against an army which could easily and certainly overlap both his flanks and quickly crush him to a pulp. He must either retreat or play a great and most hazardous game of strategy.

In consultation with Stonewall Jackson—the two being seated upon cracker boxes abandoned in Hook-

[1] Dodge's "The Campaign of Chancellorsville," p. 55.

er's retirement—it was decided to take a supreme risk in face of a supreme danger. With 39,000 men facing 120,000, it was decided to divide the smaller army and send Jackson, with 22,000 men upon an expedition, the purpose of which was to strike like a lightning flash at Hooker's right flank and rear, while Lee, with the little remnant of his army, 17,000 in all, should so far occupy Hooker in front as to prevent him from detaching troops for the timely reinforcement of his threatened wing.

The results that followed this operation have been and still are a subject of bitter controversy. Hooker tried afterwards to throw the blame for the disaster which ensued upon Howard, Sickles and his other lieutenants. They in turn disclaimed that responsibility and insisted that the disaster was due solely to Hooker's own orders and to his neglect of obvious duty as commanding general. The skilled military critics who have since written of the campaign have taken one side or the other of this purely personal controversy, according to their lights of knowledge, or their darkenings of prejudice. These things belong to biography. It is the function of the historian merely to tell the story of what happened and to that task alone the present writer addresses himself.

Lee and Jackson decided, as they sat there on the cracker boxes, that Jackson, with 22,000 men, should undertake to turn Hooker's right flank and assail him in rear, while Lee with 17,000 men should fully occupy him by a threat of front attack, and that if Jackson's movement should succeed, his part of the army should force its way to a junction with Lee.

Failing that, the two parts of the army must of course retreat in the not very confident hope of uniting again at Gordonsville and together falling back to the defenses of Richmond. For Stuart with the Confederate cavalry had utterly broken up and defeated that part of Hooker's plan which had contemplated Stoneman's sweep to Hanover Court House and the entrenching of his force there as an obstacle in the way of Lee's retreat.

On Saturday, May 2, 1863, at daylight, or a little before, Lee and Jackson began the execution of their daring stratagem.

Hooker's headquarters were at Chancellorsville. His line stretched eastward and northeastward to the river and westward to a region of high ground unassailable from the front, where his right lay "in the air," in military phrase, that is to say with no natural obstacle, such as a river or a mountain, to defend it. It was Jackson's purpose to march westward on a route parallel with Hooker's line, turn its western end and strike it in flank and rear.

To accomplish that he must completely separate his 22,000 men from Lee's 17,000 and take the chances of battle for a reuniting of the two forces.

It took all day to make the march. All day Jackson kept Stuart's cavalry between his column and the enemy, feeling the enemy's lines to find out how they were posted and what their strength was at every point.

His march was clearly discovered to the Federal troops, and fully reported to their commander, Hooker. But it was completely misinterpreted. It

was believed to be the initiatory movement of that retreat upon Richmond, which Hooker—master of logistics that he was—thought that he had by his maneuvers compelled Lee to undertake by way of saving his little army from destruction.

While Jackson, with scarcely any disguise or concealment, was marching along Hooker's front with intent to turn his flank and strike him in rear, Hooker rested easily in the conviction that his adversary, confronted by an irresistible force, was retreating upon Richmond either by way of Culpeper or by the Gordonsville route.

In this belief Hooker broke the continuity of his own lines by throwing forward a part of his forces to assail Jackson's moving column in flank and rear, but he made no effort to advance from Chancellorsville upon Lee's manifestly depleted force in front or in any vigorous way to push a column in between Lee and Jackson. He fought Lee on the skirmish lines all day, but he made no determined attempt to run over the skirmish lines and find out what was behind them. In other words he suffered himself to be completely and disastrously deceived by that tapping at his own lines which Lee ceaselessly kept up by way of misleading him.

As he knew Lee's strength almost to a man, and as he was fully and frequently informed during the day concerning the extent to which Jackson's detachment had weakened it, it is difficult to understand why he did not end the struggle then and there by hurling three men to one against Lee on the one hand and against Jackson on the other, and crushing them separately.

Here was another illustration and proof of the fact that the Federal administration at Washington had not yet found a general fit to command the superb Army of the Potomac. The opportunity at Chancellorsville was the very greatest and completest that was at any time during the war offered to a commanding general on either side to make a quick and complete end of the struggle.

Under like circumstances a Grant or a Sherman would have hurled 40,000 or 50,000 men upon Lee and an equal number upon Jackson, meanwhile employing a lesser but quite sufficient force in keeping the two wings of the Confederate army divided beyond the possibility of reunion. But it is conceivable at least that if Lee had been confronting a Grant or a Sherman, he would never have risked so dangerous a division of his inferior force. The character of the adversary's commanding general is a factor in every military problem, upon which a strategist must reckon as carefully as he does upon the number of that adversary's men or guns.

However that may be, Lee had divided his meager force in the presence of an enemy who greatly outnumbered him, and Hooker took no effective account of the fact. He did not strengthen his own right wing while Jackson was marching around it to assail it in the rear. He took no effective measures either to assail Jackson on his threatening march or to fall upon Lee in front in crushingly overwhelming force. He was content to beat off Lee's pretended attacks in front and to neglect Jackson's movement as very certainly a retreat with which he had not energy enough to interfere.

As a result Jackson succeeded in turning the Federal right flank, and at six o'clock in the evening the great Confederate flanker fell like a thunderbolt upon the rear of Hooker's divisions on the right.

Without skirmishers to give warning of his coming Jackson pushed his columns through the woods and the tangled underbrush. So eager were the Confederates in their work that their divisions, thrown into separate lines for the forward movement, pushed after each other until the several lines became a single mass of humanity pressing forward, each man striving to get in front of his fellow and be first to fall upon the foe.

Jackson knew his men too well to doubt them for a moment, and he therefore rushed them forward to the assault without any of those precautions which the books of tactics prescribe. He threw out no skirmishers to feel the way. He sent no company in advance to ascertain the enemy's disposition. He simply hurled his force upon that of the foe, striking as the tempest does, without warning.

The first intimation Hooker's men had of their enemy's advance came to them in a rush of deer, grouse and other game that had been disturbed and was fleeing through the tangled woodlands before the on-coming mass of armed and belligerent humanity. And before wonder over this rush of animals, serpents and birds had satisfied itself, Jackson's men, nine deep, fell upon the unsuspecting Federals at supper, and swept like a hurricane through their camps and over their lines.

Then occurred the second great panic of the war,

in which men fell into such fear as to lose all semblance of soldierly self-control, and in which military cohesion was completely dissipated. Here and there a brigade or a regiment or a company of Federals bravely stood its ground, but the great mass of that German army corps commanded by men of unpronounceable names which had been extensively advertised as intending to show Americans how to fight, fell into hopeless confusion, broke ranks and ran to whatever cover the fugitives could find. Jackson ran over their lines, possessed himself of their defenses, captured their arms and their suppers and completely telescoped the left wing of Hooker's army.

Night alone saved the rest of it. For panic is more contagious than smallpox and, in view of what happened afterwards, it is safe to say that but for the coming of night the panic which so suddenly reduced the right wing of Hooker's force to a mass of fugitives, would quickly have spread throughout the army.

But night called a halt and Jackson's men rested upon their arms, ready to renew their victorious progress with the dawn of day. According to a competent and adverse witness[1] these men of Jackson's command were "the best infantry in existence, as tough, hardy and full of *élan,* as they are ill-fed, ill-clothed, and ill-looking.

But a great calamity was in store for the Confederates that evening. Stonewall Jackson was mortally wounded by his own men acting under

[1] Lieutenant Colonel Theodore A. Dodge, U. S. A., in his "Campaign of Chancellorsville," p. 92.

orders of his own giving, while he was making his preparations for the completion of his wonderful work on the following morning. Except in the possible death of Lee, no greater loss could have befallen the Southern arms. The destruction of a division or even of an army corps would have been a trifling disaster in comparison. For upon Jackson as upon no other man, Lee depended for the masterful execution of his plans, and equally for wise counsel and daring initiative. The soldiers of the army, too, had come to look upon the great lieutenant as the one man invincible, and to regard whatever work he might assign them to do as a task that must be accomplished at all costs and all hazards. In the doing of his bidding, the officers and men alike were accustomed to think of their orders as the decrees of an all-wise Providence and of themselves as mere instruments set to accomplish the purposes of a higher authority. No man among them questioned the wisdom of Jackson's plans or doubted the possibility of doing whatsoever he had ordered them to do. In such mood as that which their reverent love for Jackson inspired in them, those incomparable fighters were capable of well-nigh any achievement.

When it was whispered through the army that Stonewall Jackson was wounded unto death there was mourning and distress at every bivouac fire, and depressing sorrow in every soldierly heart. But there was no thought of failure or faltering in the work to be done on the morrow. That work had been marked out for them by Stonewall Jackson himself, and every man of them was resolved to do it or fall

fighting in a determined endeavor to accomplish to the uttermost limit of possibility the will of the fallen chieftain.

The command fell upon J. E. B. Stuart and after sustaining a midnight assault upon the Confederate flank by Sickles, which was repulsed with comparative ease, Stuart was prepared, early on Sunday morning, to press forward with the entire detachment and force a junction with Lee in front of Chancellorsville, after destroying or driving into retreat all of Hooker's forces that lay west of that point.

There was terrific fighting at every step. There were formidable breastworks to be assailed and carried, and they were protected by difficult abattis in front. There were superbly served batteries at every defensive point with determined infantry in support. But the men who had been Jackson's yesterday, and were to-day under the dare-devil leadership of Stuart, remembered that Jackson had planned this movement and they were death-resolute to carry it to completion. They pressed forward always. A "fire of hell" meant no more to them than a summer breeze. In face of canister and a murderous fire of musketry, they plunged onward with no thought of hesitation or shrinking.

Jackson lay under a tree somewhere, wounded unto death, but it was Jackson still whom these heroic fellows were serving; it was in obedience to his orders and in execution of his plans that they were advancing, and their inspiration of resoluteness had for one of its elements a mad resentment of Jackson's wounds, as an injury for which the enemy must be

made to pay the blood atonement of those old Scriptures in whose words Jackson so devoutly and reverently believed.

Probably never before or since in battle did men fight with a madder impulse than did this "best infantry in existence" on that Sunday morning, in execution of their stricken leader's purpose. They were very maniacs, filled with fury, assailing the enemy at every point with truly demoniacal determination, reinforced by all the strength and skill that long discipline and battle-habit could give to men with arms in their hands.

In spite of numbers, in the face of obstacles that would have appalled the best battalions in any European army, these grief-stricken worshipers of the great leader, swept forward as the hurricane does, regardless of all obstacles and absolutely resistless in their onward progress.

Their impulse was indicated by the battle cry, "Charge and remember Jackson!" which was continually passed up and down the lines by word of mouth throughout the day, by men with set teeth and lips compressed to paleness.

Early in the morning it was Stuart's thought to refresh some of his troops who had been long without food. He ordered an issue of rations and a pause for breakfast, meantime directing a small advance in order to rectify the line at a defective point. The men rushed forward with such impetuosity, abandoning rations and taking the bloody work of war in lieu of breakfast, that Stuart decided to let them have their way and bring on at once the action for which it

had been his thought to prepare them by a feeding. The incident is valuably illustrative of the temper in which that Sunday's fight was undertaken, a fight decisive for the time, and ending as it did in the defeat and overthrow of the largest, strongest, and most perfectly equipped army that had ever been assembled on this continent, by a force one third or one fourth its number, ill-fed, ill-clothed and exceedingly ill-looking, as Colonel Dodge has testified in print.

Here it is necessary to make an important distinction, which is often overlooked. When troops are beaten by an adversary having inferior numbers, the fault is not always or even usually with the men. It lies almost always with commanding officers who, through error or incapacity or otherwise, fail to bring the men into such positions as may render their superiority of numbers effective. At Chancellorsville Hooker had quite all of three men to Lee's one—and including Sedgwick's force his odds were even greater than that. On the part of the so-called German corps there seems to have been a distinct inferiority of soldierly quality, while Jackson's men, according to the expert judgment of Colonel Dodge, supported by that of General Hooker, were "the best infantry in existence." But between the men generally of the two armies there was no such superiority on the one side and inferiority on the other as to offset the enormous disparity of numbers and thus to account for the result.

The difficulty was that in the great war game Lee was immeasurably more than Hooker's master. At every point he so handled his forces as to bewilder

and embarrass his enemy. In spite of his inferiority in numbers he managed at many points, by deft maneuvering, to assail Hooker's divisions, with more men than they could for the moment bring to bear in resistance.

In reviewing great battles and campaigns it is important to bear these things in mind, and, for the credit of a brave soldiery, to remember that all dispositions of troops are made by men higher up. The skill and alertness of those men higher up, or their lack of skill and alertness, determines whether or not due advantage is to be taken of numbers, the nature of the ground and other adventitious circumstances upon which the outcome of battles in a large measure depends.

At Chancellorsville, for example, there was one position so favorable that the artillery of either army, posted there upon the crest of a commanding hill, could work havoc in the ranks of its adversary. The Federals held that position when night fell on Saturday. They unwisely abandoned it during the night and early in the morning Stuart, always quick to see and alert to seize advantage, occupied it with thirty guns too strongly supported to be dislodged. In like manner the superior generalship of the Confederates at other points enabled them often to bring two men to bear against one in spite of their general inferiority of numbers.

When Hooker found his right wing crushed and reduced to a panic-stricken mass of fugitives, he still had the battle in his own hands and victory easily within his grasp.

After Jackson's blow was delivered on Saturday evening Hooker could not have doubted that Lee's little army of less than forty thousand men had been divided in his front. It was his obvious and easy task to keep it divided and to crush its two parts separately. He had already thrust Sickles in between Lee and Jackson, and in order to maintain the separation he had only overwhelmingly to reinforce Sickles, an enterprising officer. This he might easily have done by drawing troops from his completely unemployed left wing which stretched away superfluously to the fords of the river with no enemy at all in front.

The war problem was simple and easy at that time, and had Hooker been a man of masterful mind, he must have wrought it out to checkmate within twenty-four hours.

But it is to be remembered that Lee knew all old army officers, and knew the capacity and temper of every commander sent to oppose him. It is probable that had Hooker been a man of masterful mind, Lee would never have attempted the strategy which created this opportunity.

Let us leave speculation for facts. Hooker had unaccountably abandoned his brilliant offensive movement at the crowning moment when its success, complete and decisive, seemed certain. Having come out to force Lee to a fight in the open, he had shrunk from the conflict. Having skilfully and brilliantly so maneuvered as to place himself on the flank of Lee's army with intent to assail and overwhelm his adversary, he had suddenly shrunk back, as if appalled, into a defensive attitude and had left it to Lee

to determine when and where and how the further fighting should be done. Having advanced from Chancellorsville into the more favorable country beyond, he had quite inexplicably fallen back to Chancellorsville again and fortified there as if he had been confronted by an adversary of superior strength, and when he clearly saw that Lee had divided his inferior force, he had over-confidently assumed that retreat was intended instead of a blow.

But even after the blow had been delivered, with staggering effect, Hooker had the war game in his own hands. It was his obvious policy to order fifty or sixty thousand men or more from his unemployed left wing, to Chancellorsville, to fall destructively upon each of Lee's widely separated detachments, with the purpose of crushing them both.

He did nothing of the kind. Instead he stood upon the defensive against Lee in front and Stuart upon his flank, and utterly failing to prevent a junction between these two he retired still further and stood upon the defensive again to receive their joint assault.

In the meantime he had unemployed troops in vastly superior numbers, lying idly upon his left. Instead of ordering them into the conflict he waited for Sedgwick, who was coming up after driving the Confederates out of their works at Fredericksburg, to save him from defeat and disaster.

In the meanwhile, and for lack of the reinforcements which he had failed to send to the firing line, the Confederates had won a great victory, reuniting their divided army and completely driving Hooker from the defensive position which he had taken up at Chancellorsville.

Stuart's hurricane-like advance, begun early in the morning, resulted long before noonday, not only in effecting the desired junction between the two separated portions of the Confederate Army, but also in the compulsory retirement of Hooker's army from the entire Chancellorsville line and its retreat toward the river.

The fighting by which all this was accomplished has been wonderfully well described in summary, by Colonel Dodge, in his admirably complete and impartial history of this campaign. A quotation from that work seems a quite sufficient showing-forth of what was done, with equal justice to the heroism of the men on both sides of the terrible conflict. Colonel Dodge writes:

> There can be no limit to the praise earned by the mettlesome veterans of Jackson's corps, in the deadly fight at Fairview. They had continuously marched and fought with little sleep and less rations, since Thursday morning [till Sunday]. Their ammunition had been sparse, and they had been obliged to rely frequently upon the bayonet alone. They had fought under circumstances which rendered all attempts to preserve organization impossible. They had charged through woods against well-constructed fieldworks and in the teeth of destructive artillery fire, and had captured the works again and again. Never had infantry better earned the right to rank with the best which ever bore arms than this gallant twenty thousand—one man in every four of whom lay bleeding on the field. Nor can the same meed of praise be withheld from our own brave legions. Our losses had been heavier than those of the enemy. Generals and regimental commanders had fallen in equal proportions. Our forces had, owing to the extraordinary combinations of the general in command, been outnumbered by the enemy wherever engaged. . . . Well may the soldiers who were engaged

in this bloody encounter of Sunday, May 3, 1863, call to mind with equal pride, that each met a foeman worthy of his steel.

It is in this spirit that the present historian desires to write of the events of that time, forty odd years agone. All the military skill, all the heroism, all the personal courage that marked the events of that struggle, whether upon the one side or upon the other, is a part of our common American heritage of glory. For these men who fought each other so gallantly and with such heroic determination, were all Americans, and to all of them Americans owe the tribute of admiration.

After all these years the memory of their gallant deeds will be cherished by the whole Republic and all its people, whether the heroism of daring and endurance was shown on the one side or on the other. The men who met in battle there were fighting on the one side and on the other for liberty. Their views differed as to what would best minister to liberty, but their purpose was the same. The questions that divided them were long ago settled, and they no longer vex the Republic. The time has come when we may rejoice as citizens of one country in the devotion and courage that animated both sides in that great struggle for the decision of questions that could be settled only by the arbitrament of arms.

On Sunday, before noon, Hooker was completely driven from the Chancellorsville line and compelled to retire to a new position of extraordinary strength. Lee, with an army much smaller and considerably disorganized, but inspirited by repeated victory, con-

fronted him. It was Lee's purpose to move again to the assault, in the conviction that the delivery of another of his tremendous blows would result in breaking Hooker's resistance and driving him across the river. It is true that Hooker still had a vastly superior force, but events had clearly shown that the Federal commander did not know how to handle his superior forces in a way to make the most of their superiority. Lee confidently believed that even with his smaller numbers he could deliver a blow that would drive his adversary out of the new lines as his previous assaults had already driven him out of the old ones.

The new position taken up by the Army of the Potomac is described by an engineer officer of high authority as "well-nigh impregnable," and the Army of Northern Virginia was very nearly worn out with the work it had done in conquering the former situation. But it was Lee's habit of mind to do and dare, and he had sufficiently tried conclusions now, to know beyond all question, that in the war game he was immeasurably more than Hooker's match.

So about noon on Sunday he began feeling of Hooker's new lines, searching for the most favorable point at which to hurl himself upon them in the hope of breaking them and driving his enemy into final retreat. For Lee's strategy no longer had any element of defensive purpose in it. He was no longer thinking of defense indeed or of securing lines of retreat. It was his bold thought to assail Hooker and destroy him with all his superior forces, or at the very least to drive him back across the river and take into

his own keeping the problem of where and how the campaigning of 1863 should be done. Says Colonel Dodge:[1]

> Hooker still had in line at Chancellorsville, counting out his losses of Saturday, over eighty-five thousand men. Lee had not exceeding half the number. But every musket borne by the Army of Northern Virginia was put to good use; every round of ammunition was made to tell its story. On the other hand of the effective of the Army of the Potomac, barely a quarter was fought *au fond*, while at least one half the force for duty was given no opportunity to burn a cartridge to aid in checking the onset of the elated champions of the South.

So much for disparity in generalship. The South had found its great and masterful commander, who knew how to utilize to the utmost such forces as were placed at his disposal. Mr. Lincoln had not yet found a general capable of employing to the full measure of its capacity, the superb army which the North had created by a lavish expenditure of treasure and by the eager volunteering of Northern youth for their country's service. Ulysses S. Grant was still the subordinate of Halleck and the Army of the Potomac was commanded by a general utterly unequal to the task of holding his own in a contest with Robert E. Lee.

In his new position Hooker stood upon the defensive and appealed to Sedgwick, who held the position below Fredericksburg, to come to his rescue and save him from disaster.

Sedgwick responded promptly, as it was his custom to do, though the task set him was a difficult one. He

[1] "The Campaign of Chancellorsville," p. 156.

must assail Lee's works at Fredericksburg, drive out the 8,500 confident Confederates who were holding the trenches there, and then by a march of some weary miles fall upon Lee's right and rear, thus rescuing Hooker from the peril of the great Confederate's persistent assaults.

A whole library of controversial literature has been written in conflicting efforts to show who was to blame for the failure of Sedgwick to relieve Hooker in time to save him from the vengeance of Lee. With that controversy the present narrative of facts in no way concerns itself. Let us simply tell what happened.

Already in command of an available force twice as great as Lee's, Hooker, driven from his chosen line, had fallen back to a more concentrated one. Finding Lee disposed, with one man to his two, to assail him on this new line, he called upon Sedgwick as already stated, to come to his relief, against enormous obstacles. The order was received late at night. Its execution required a complete change in Sedgwick's dispositions, which had been made with the entirely different purpose of cutting off Lee's retreat after Hooker should have broken the Confederate resistance at Chancellorsville. So far from breaking that resistance Hooker had been forced to yield to it and retire before it.

Sedgwick changed front, drove Lee's 8,500 men out of the works at Fredericksburg, and pushed on to assail Lee's flank. Lee detached, to meet him, all of his small force except the Jackson corps of 19,000 men, with which he undertook, personally, to hold in

check any movement that Hooker might make with the 80,000 or more of hardened veterans whom the Federal commander had under his immediate orders. But Hooker made no determined movement. On Sunday a fierce battle was fought between Sedgwick and those of Lee's forces which were engaged in trying to check his movement. It ended in the Confederates holding their ground and defeating Sedgwick's purpose of coming to the relief of his commander.

Early on Monday morning the Confederates succeeded in reoccupying the Fredericksburg Heights in Sedgwick's rear, which left him, in case of defeat, with no course open to him except to retreat across the river and give up the contest.

To compel this the Confederates, falling upon him at six o'clock in the evening, pressed him at every point while Hooker, with the main body of the Federal army, lay quite inert in rear of Chancellorsville. Soon after nightfall Sedgwick crossed the river, leaving the Confederates in full possession of the Fredericksburg Heights and of all the region east of the fords upon which Hooker depended for retreat in case of necessity.

Lee next set about the task of compelling that retreat. With full confidence in the willingness and the abundant ability of his men to respond to any demand he might make upon them for activity, he quickly ordered the reinforcements with which he had strengthened his right wing for the day's work, to return, and with the bulk of his force thus reunited, after having disposed of Sedgwick he was ready to fall upon Hooker.

During these operations against Sedgwick Lee's army had been for the second time divided. A great part of it had been sent half a dozen miles or more away to force Sedgwick back to the river and across it. In the meanwhile Lee, with a mere fragment of his force, had lain in front of Hooker. Why Hooker did not fall upon him and destroy him with the eighty thousand men whom he could easily have brought to bear against less than twenty thousand, is a question that can be answered only by the reminder that Hooker was not equal to the task of successfully handling the marvelous fighting machine which the North had so successfully created. Great as he was as a fighter under some other and abler man's direction, Hooker in command of 120,000 men seems to have been paralyzed by the magnitude of his task. He left it to Lee, with his greatly smaller force to determine when and where the fighting should be done. He lay still and let Lee alone while the greater part of Lee's army was detached upon the mission of driving Sedgwick across the river and recapturing the heights at Fredericksburg. He lay still while Lee was bringing back the troops thus detached and putting himself in readiness to strike that final blow that should break the Federal lines, drive them back across the river, and make an inglorious end of Hooker's superbly planned but phenomenally ill-executed campaign.

On Monday, May 4, he had 80,000 men (Dodge) under his immediate command at Chancellorsville, with more than 20,000 under Sedgwick within easy call, as an available reinforcement. At the very

most Lee could bring less than 30,000 to bear against him even if every movement in concentration should be successfully made. Yet according to his own testimony, given two years later, Hooker decided on Monday to retreat across the river. He called his major generals together "not as a council of war" he says in his testimony, but merely to find out how they felt with regard to the alternative policy of making what Hooker himself regarded as "a desperate move against the enemy in our front." That "desperate move" was the assailing of less than 30,000 men by more than 80,000 of as good soldiers as ever pulled a trigger, while 20,000 more remained within call as reinforcements.

It was decided by Hooker, against the nearly unanimous advice of his lieutenants not to make that "desperate move," and the history of war records no more lame and impotent conclusion than that. It was decided by Hooker that the great army which had made a splendid strategic movement for the purpose of fighting Lee in the open and destroying him by overwhelming numbers, should run away from him and escape beyond the river if he should graciously permit it to do so.

To that end—to render possible the escape of 80,000 resolute men from the assault of less than 30,000 of the enemy, all the engineering skill that the Army of the Potomac could command was brought to bear. It protected the roads with abattis and the bridge heads with batteries which the aggressively insistent Confederates shelled persistently. A sudden rise in the river for a time threatened the retreat

with failure and placed a part of the force in danger of destruction or capture. But in the end Hooker succeeded in extricating his army from its position. Early on the morning of May 6, the last battalions of the Army of the Potomac withdrew across the river.

Thus ended in failure the most brilliantly planned attempt that had yet been made to destroy Confederate resistance, conquer the Confederate capital and make a mercifully early end of a fratricidal war of stupendous proportions.

Hooker reported his losses during the campaign at 17,285 men; Lee's loss was 12,277.

If Lee could have attacked Hooker's fleeing columns when they were huddled together at the bridge ends on the river, demoralized and without organization as they were, he might easily have multiplied the Federal loss in killed, wounded, and prisoners by two or three. General Schurz once expressed to the present historian his astonishment that Lee neglected to do this. Perhaps the best answer is given in an extract from Colonel Dodge's exhaustive history of the conflict. He writes that Lee "was doubtless profoundly grateful that the Army of the Potomac should retire across the Rappahannock and leave his troops to the hard-earned rest they needed so much more than ourselves; but little thanks are due to Hooker, who was, it seems, on the north side of the river during these critical moments that the casualties of the campaign were not doubled by a final assault on the part of Lee while we lay in this perilous situation. . . . Providentially the artillery of the Army of Northern Virginia had expended almost its last round of ammunition previous to this time."

Thus accident alone saved the rear of Hooker's defeated army from a disaster and demoralization comparable with that of Manassas, at a time when, in the urgently expressed opinion of General Sickles, the conspicuous rout of the Army of the Potomac would necessarily have meant the abandonment of the struggle by the North. "If," he alleged, "this army should be destroyed, it would be the last one the country would raise."

Hooker had lost, by his own incapacity, a decisive opportunity to end the war with Federal success, and Lee, because of a lack of ammunition, had lost a still more obvious opportunity to end it by a decisive triumph of the Confederate arms.

CHAPTER XXXVIII

The Gettysburg Campaign

When the campaign of Chancellorsville ended in defeat for the Federals, the two armies returned to their former positions at Fredericksburg, confronting each other with a river between—a river which neither of them was for the time being disposed to cross with fighting intent.

Hooker, as his orders issued at that time showed, was content as McClellan had been the year before, that he had saved his great army from disastrous defeat and capture. He was glad to escape with what remained of his army from a position which he had brilliantly achieved in the confident expectation of there completely crushing Lee, compelling his surrender, and marching unopposed into Richmond. His escape had been a very narrow one, made possible only by the exhaustion of the Confederate ammunition, but at any rate he had escaped, and he was disposed to congratulate himself on that.

Lee, on the other hand had good reason to be satisfied with the results of his work. With one man to his enemy's three he had so brilliantly maneuvered as to strike his foe at each point with a superior force; he had, by virtue of superior genius alone inflicted disaster upon an army vastly greater than his own in numbers, and possessed of commanding strategic

positions; he had beaten that army in a succession of battles, and driven it into hurried and uncertain retreat; he had saved Richmond and again made himself master of the military situation.

His army needed rest after its arduous work, and to give it rest he lay still for some weeks.

But in the meanwhile he did not lose sight of that supreme purpose which had inspired him from the beginning of his career as the commander of the Army of Northern Virginia. That purpose was to transfer the seat of war northward, to press the enemy, to protect Richmond by putting Washington on its defense.

There were special reasons for the adoption of this policy now. Operations at the West had been disastrous and discouraging to the Confederates. Their armies had been driven out of Kentucky and Tennessee. The fall of Island Number Ten and Memphis a little later in the northern reaches of the Mississippi and Farragut's capture of New Orleans at its southern end had left the Southerners only a small hold upon the great river at Vicksburg, Port Hudson and the space between. Grant was insistently hammering at Vicksburg, with every prospect of soon capturing that key to the river and completely cutting the Confederacy in twain. But if Lee could capture Washington or compel its evacuation by pushing himself into its rear and perhaps seizing upon Baltimore, Philadelphia and New York, the disasters at the West would count for nothing in the reckoning. Europe at least would accept the successful invasion of the North and the conquest of its capital as events

decisive of the war in behalf of the South; and European intervention was still the one thing most dreaded at the North and most ardently hoped for at the South.

Again there was a strong party at the North, embracing a minority so great that a small influence might easily convert it into a majority, which was opposed to the war in every way and bitterly antagonistic to the Lincoln administration. That party held the war upon the seceding states to be wrong, wicked and without adequate constitutional warrant. It contended also that the conduct of the war had been recklessly wasteful of life and treasure, and that in point of fact it had failed of its purpose. In support of this view the people opposed to Mr. Lincoln cited the Manassas panic, the defeat of McClellan before Richmond, the utter overthrow of Pope, the drawn battle at Sharpsburg, the defeat of Burnside at Fredericksburg, and finally the all-conspicuous defeat of Hooker at Chancellorsville. If Lee could add to such a list of achievements the conquest of Washington or Philadelphia or if he could win a great battle anywhere north of the Potomac, this minority of protesting and complaining malcontents at the North, must be quickly converted into an overwhelming majority, clamorous for the ending of the war by the concession of all that the Confederates demanded.

Still another influence had its bearing upon Lee's mind. His army, after its experiences in the Seven Days' battles, in the second Manassas campaign, at Antietam, at Fredericksburg, and finally in the campaign of Chancellorsville, had come to regard itself

as absolutely invincible when led by Robert E. Lee. It was ready and more than ready for any enterprise that he might direct it to undertake. It believed in itself. Still more confidently it believed in Lee. It wanted to fight. It was restlessly eager for whatever Lee might prescribe of daring and endurance. Probably there was never an army, great or small, whose spirit gave to its leader a stronger inducement to desperate endeavor. Those men wanted war. They courted battle. They welcomed hardship, exposure, fatigue, starvation—if only at the end of it all they might come face to face with the enemy, under the leadership of Lee.

A skilled military critic on the Northern side has characterized them as the best soldiers on earth. The phrase is not an extravagant one, as every close student of the Confederate war must clearly see, and their spirit meant more to the enlightened mind of Lee than a hundred guns and a score of infantry divisions could have signified.

There was still another fact to be taken into account. Under the mistaken system of short-term enlistments which had been adopted at the North, more than thirty thousand of Hooker's best and most seasoned soldiers were about this time going home. Enlistments at the North had well-nigh ceased under the discouragement of repeated failure, while at the South the conscription law—extended as to age—had resulted in putting pretty nearly every able-bodied white man in all that region into the army. The Army of Northern Virginia was being rapidly swelled in numbers, while the Army of the Potomac

was losing many of its best fighting regiments and brigades. The Army of Northern Virginia was flushed by recent and conspicuous victory; the Army of the Potomac was sadly disheartened by a defeat which, in view of its vast superiority in numbers, it could in no wise account for or understand. The Army of Northern Virginia had unbounded confidence in itself and limitless belief in its commander; the Army of the Potomac had no longer any reason to trust itself, and it had utterly lost confidence in the general who had so badly handled it as to subject it to humiliating defeat where it had justly expected to achieve victory quick, certain and decisive.

Moved by these considerations Lee at once planned a new invasion of the region north of the Potomac. The enemy confronting him was still superior in numbers, equipment and everything else except spirit and fighting quality and its general. It would not do for Lee to move northward, leaving that army in his rear with full opportunity to destroy his communications, rush upon Richmond and possess the Confederate capital. He must so maneuver as to compel Hooker to fall back upon Washington, precisely as he had done in McClellan's case the year before.

Again he successfully played upon the excessive concern felt at the North for the safety of Washington. Having brought Longstreet with two strong divisions from the south side of the James river for his reinforcement, and having brought up every battery and battalion that could be spared from any other position, Lee played again the game he had played against McClellan. While still strongly and

securely holding his position at Fredericksburg, he began detaching forces in a way to threaten Washington with an attack in the rear, and to compel Hooker to retire upon the national capital for its defense.

First he sent Stuart with his splendid cavalry to Culpeper Court House. Then, a little later, he sent Ewell's and Longstreet's corps to the same point, retaining only A. P. Hill's corps to hold the works at Fredericksburg. Should Hooker deem this an opportunity and seek to seize it, it would require fully three days at the very least for him to lay pontoon bridges and push a column across the river for purposes of assault. In the event of such a demonstration two days would amply suffice Lee to bring his two detached corps back to the works at Fredericksburg, there to defend them irresistibly. Hooker was much too discreet a general not to see this, and so he undertook no crossing of the river.

Lee was thus left in complete control of the military situation. The transfer of two of his army corps to Culpeper was a threat to Washington and Washington promptly responded—as Lee intended that it should do—by calling upon Hooker for the retirement of his army for the defense of the National capital.

Hooker ordered all his cavalry, under Pleasanton, to move against and assail the Confederate horsemen under Stuart at or near Culpeper. The two forces met at Brandy Station, where for the first time in the history of the Confederate War a strictly cavalry contest of great proportions ensued. The Confed-

erates had distinctly the better of it. They repelled the assault, with losses about equal on either side, and left the Federals with no further information as to the Confederate movement than they had had before the action. As the acquisition of such information was precisely all that Pleasanton had fought to secure, it must be reckoned that he had failed in his purpose. But he had at any rate proved that the Federal cavalry men had at last learned how to ride their horses, an art in which they had proved themselves distinctly inferior to the Confederates in all previous conflicts between horsemen of the two sides.

On the thirteenth of June Ewell's corps was in the Valley of the Shenandoah marching northward; Hill was still holding the entrenchments at Fredericksburg, while Longstreet was in a position near Culpeper, from which he could reinforce either at will.

Hooker had by this time recovered the sanity which he had so completely lost during the campaign of Chancellorsville and he at once asked permission of Washington to push the whole of his vastly superior force in between the separated fragments of Lee's army and destroy them in detail. This was obviously the right thing to do, but Halleck was still in supreme control at Washington, and Hooker, by his phenomenal failure at Chancellorsville, had justly lost Halleck's confidence. Moreover Lee knew all about this situation, and, knowing Halleck quite as well as he knew Hooker, he was reckoning upon that general's character.

Halleck forbade Hooker to make the bold move he proposed, precisely as Lee had expected him to do,

and Lee was thus left free to direct the course of the campaign as he pleased.

Hooker, under orders, retired toward Washington, leaving Lee free to add Hill's corps to the forces with which he was advancing northward.

Ewell swept down the valley and assailed Winchester, where he completely broke and destroyed Milroy's force of ten thousand men, capturing four thousand of them and driving the rest into disorderly retreat upon Harper's Ferry.

Lee promptly threw Hill's corps into the Shenandoah Valley, while Longstreet moved northward upon parallel lines, east of the mountains.

Presently the Confederate cavalry crossed the Potomac and reached Chambersburg in Pennsylvania. The infantry and artillery promptly followed, and by the twenty-second or twenty-third of June, the whole Confederate army was in Pennsylvania—threatening Washington, threatening Baltimore, threatening Philadelphia, and gravely menacing even New York.

A great panic ensued among the Northern people, to whom the fact of war had not often before been brought home in this intimate and terrifying fashion. Women and children fled as refugees. Horses and cattle were driven away into hiding. Silverware and jewels were hastily buried, and all food stuffs that could be carried away were hidden. For the first time the people at the North had some small realization of what war means to those who dwell in an invaded country. They suffered no such desolation as that which for years overspread northern Virginia.

They learned no such lesson of havoc as that which Sheridan afterwards mercilessly taught the people of that fruitful valley of Virginia over which, after his desolating march, he picturesquely said that "the crow that flies must carry his rations with him." But at the least they learned that to a people whose land is invaded, war is truly "all hell," in General Sherman's phrase.

There was a hurried calling out of militia in the threatened states, quite as if militia could be expected to stand against the veterans who had fought at Richmond, at Antietam, at Fredericksburg and at Chancellorsville. Half a million of militia, if so many could have been brought together, would have been able to oppose no obstacle to the determined will of such veteran soldiers as these. At that stage of the war, the militia and raw, untrained volunteers on either side, had ceased to be regarded as forces to be reckoned with.

A more important fact was that Hooker was moving with his veteran army to meet Lee, keeping himself always between the great Confederate and the National capital.

Again as during the former invasion, there were eleven thousand Federal troops holding Harper's Ferry. Again, as a year before, the general commanding the Army of the Potomac wanted to save them to his army by ordering them to evacuate the place and join him in the field. Again, as on the former occasion, Halleck refused to sanction this, in spite of the obvious fact that the Confederates must certainly and easily capture the whole of that force unless it should save itself by timely retreat.

About this time Hooker, in disgust at the restraints to which he was subjected, asked to be relieved of the command of the Army of the Potomac, and General Meade, a very much abler man, was appointed to succeed him. Meade instantly ordered the evacuation of Harper's Ferry—the very thing that Hooker had been forbidden to order, and thus saved eleven thousand seasoned troops to the Army with which he must presently confront Lee.

On the twenty-eighth of June Lee's army lay at Chambersburg, York, and Carlisle, in Pennsylvania. In that position it threatened Baltimore, Harrisburg and Philadelphia about equally. It might move upon either at will and in either case cut off Washington. The problem of the Army of the Potomac was to find out its adversary's intention and interpose itself at whatever point interposition might seem to be most necessary.

In the course of this advance, Lee made one capital blunder. It was his courteous custom, in giving orders to his higher lieutenants, to leave much to their discretion, if only by way of emphasizing his confidence in them. In this case he left much to the discretion of Stuart, who had no discretion, although he had every other good quality of the soldier. Lee ordered Stuart to make certain movements if they commended themselves to his judgment, but left him in effect free to do as he pleased, assuming that he would please to do that which was discreet, bearing in mind that the cavalry are the eyes and ears of the army.

It was Stuart's chief business to find out and re-

port every movement of the Army of the Potomac, to follow its every march, to learn what it was planning to do, and at every step to find out and report to Lee the force employed in each maneuver. Stuart was an adept in this work. No man then living—probably no man who ever lived—knew better than he did how to find out the purposes of an enemy or to estimate his strength or to determine where and when that enemy meant to strike.

But by virtue of his orders, Stuart was free to do what he pleased; and it pleased him to find out how nearly his cavaliers could ride into Washington, to throw shells into that city and generally to impress himself dramatically and theatrically upon the Federal administration as a terror.

As a consequence Lee was left without that information as to his adversary's movements which he depended upon the cavalry to furnish. While Stuart was trying to throw shells into Washington, Meade was concentrating his forces toward Gettysburg, to meet his opponent there and Lee was left in ignorance of the fact.

Accordingly when the head of Lee's somewhat scattered and straggling column came upon a Federal force occupying a strong position at Gettysburg which it had been Lee's intention that his own advance forces should seize and hold, there were all the elements of surprise in the situation.

Neither army was as yet sufficiently concentrated to deliver a blow that might be decisive. Lee had in all about 73,500 infantry and artillery—the largest army he ever commanded. Meade had about 82,000

effective infantry and artillery. The cavalry on each side numbered ten or eleven thousand sabers, but Lee's horsemen were absent, trying to make a display of themselves, while Meade's were in front, where they ought to have been, trying to secure for their commander full information and promptly to seize upon the best positions that might avail to give him advantage in the approaching fight. This difference gave to Meade about 93,000 fighting men against 73,000 on the other side.

Lee's army was strangely scattered. A part of it was at York; a part of it at Carlisle; a part of it at Chambersburg, and another part in front of Gettysburg. Because of Stuart's aberration Lee knew nothing of his enemy's movements until the head of his column ran against Meade's forces at Gettysburg. He seems to have expected Meade to remain south of the Potomac, or at the most to cross that river and place himself in the northern defenses of Washington. He had ordered the concentration of the Confederate forces at Gettysburg without the smallest expectation of finding the Army of the Potomac there to meet him in full force.

A glance at a map will show the reader how completely the position at Gettysburg dominates the military geography, and how perfectly his mastery of it would have enabled Lee to dictate the further course of the campaign.

It is greatly to the credit of General Meade as a strategist that he quickly saw all this and hurried his army forward to occupy that commanding position before Lee could seize upon and control it.

He did this masterfully. When Lee's advance reached Gettysburg on the first of July, it found itself opposed by a force too great for it to deal with in any summary fashion. And that force had seized upon positions of the utmost strategic value before the Confederates reached Gettysburg.

Here a little topographical information is necessary to a clear understanding. With the aid of any good map of the region it may be condensed into brief space.

The town of Gettysburg was itself of no consequence to either side. The military position among the hills surrounding it was vitally important.

Many roads converge at this point. A trifle over two miles south of the town there are two bold and commanding hills—Round Top and Little Round Top. From these a line of hills extends toward the town, commanding the lower ground to the east and west. This is called Cemetery Ridge, and is not to be confounded with Seminary Ridge, presently to be mentioned. Cemetery Ridge, just before it reaches the town, trends off to the east and ends in Culp's Hill.

West of the town is another and higher ridge, also running north and south, called Seminary Ridge. Just west of these high grounds is Willoughby Run, a little creek which afforded opportunity for attack and defense.

When Lee learned that Meade, instead of sitting down to the defense of Washington, was advancing against his communications, he ordered his army to concentrate at Gettysburg for a decisive battle.

Meade in the meanwhile was pushing his columns to that point. Here were two masters of the game of war, who, while opposing each other, were agreed that Gettysburg was the key to the situation. The strategic value of that point was equally apparent to both.

Lee, being left in the dark by Stuart's absence, was slowly advancing in detachments, in order to subsist his army upon the country, confident that his enemy was still lingering around Washington and that he had himself ample time in which to seize the commanding positions in advance of the foe's approach. Meade, meanwhile, was perfectly informed of Lee's movements and was hourly quickening his march.

When the head of Lee's column under Ewell reached the neighborhood of Gettysburg on the first of July, it encountered not only the Federal cavalry, which it had expected to find there and to brush aside without difficulty, but the whole of Meade's advance corps—artillery and infantry—under Reynolds, while another corps under Howard was hurrying up in support.

Siezing upon the line of Willoughby Run the Federals undertook to hold it and the hills in rear of it against the enemy's assault. Ewell, expecting to encounter no resistance except such as the cavalry and perhaps some brigades of Pennsylvania militia, could offer, advanced confidently only to find his way disputed by some of the best veteran corps of the Army of the Potomac.

Reynolds, commanding the Federal advance, was

killed early in the action and Doubleday succeeded him. Howard presently superseded Doubleday in chief command and later Hancock replaced Howard.

So completely had Lee been left in the dark by the vagaries of his cavalry leader that in ordering Ewell's advance upon Gettysburg he had intended only that his lieutenant should brush away the cavalry and militia there, seize upon the strategic positions and hold them easily until the Confederate army could come up and plant itself impregnably to receive the attack which the foe must make in sheer desperation. But when Ewell approached the town and found himself confronted by the strongest corps of Meade's army instead of merely having cavalry and militia to deal with, it was imperative upon him to bring on a general action at once, in disobedience of Lee's order to avoid such an action until the other Confederate army corps should come up. Ewell was much too wise a soldier not to see the necessity of striking at once and with all the force he could command in the hope of securing for Lee some at least of the strong positions and thus giving to the Confederates an opportunity to fight the great and inevitable battle with a reasonable hope of winning it.

So Ewell struck hard with what force he had, and the enemy struck back with equal vigor. Hour after hour the conflict endured, the men on both sides fighting with determination and calmly enduring a slaughter that only veterans could have stood.

When Lee heard the roar of the conflict and, with practised ear measured its severity, he hurried forward reinforcements as fast as possible, and mean-

while sent a messenger to ask Ewell "What are you fighting there?" In response Ewell answered, "The whole Yankee army, I think."

Here at last the advance forces of the two greatest and gallantest armies ever assembled on this continent had met, each under a leader in whom it had confidence. Here at last, with approximately equal numbers those two armies faced each other with intent to fight out to a finish the question which of them was the better organized for the work of war. The Federals outnumbered the Confederates by no more than 15,000 men or so, and the *élan* the Confederates had brought with them out of recent victories, together with their limitless confidence in Lee's superiority to any living man as a general, served adequately to offset that small advantage.

The courage of the men on both sides was matchless. Their endurance was superb. Their heroism was such as poets rejoice to celebrate in song. The drama, with all its arts and all its accessories has no "effects" to offer, that can for one instant compare in masterfulness with those presented by the story of this struggle of Americans against Americans for the mastery.

Toward the end of the day, the Confederate onsets proved irresistible and the Federal forces in large part at least, fell into retreat. But with the cavalry standing fast and with a brigade of infantry strongly posted on Cemetery Ridge, Hancock, who had assumed command on the field, succeeded in stopping the flight and forming a new line along the crest of Cemetery Ridge.

Thus ended the first day's fight. The Confederates had had the better of it in certain ways. They had been taken by surprise, not in the usual way by being unexpectedly set upon by an army whose assault they were not anticipating, but by finding in their path, when seeking to occupy an advantageous position, a veteran army skilfully handled and well commanded, where they had expected to meet only light bodies of cavalry and militiamen whose resistance they might regard as lightly as they would the small embarrassment of a field of ripening grain. They had lost heavily in the ensuing conflict, but they had driven their foes—or most of them—into retreat and had occupied positions from which the great battles of the ensuing days might be waged with hope and confidence.

During all the night that followed, as during all that first day of fighting, the army corps and divisions and brigades on both sides marched ceaselessly in an endeavor to put themselves into their places on the line in time for the final struggle. Some of them, on either side, marched eighteen miles, some twenty-five, and one at least on the Federal side tramped wearily over thirty-three miles of distance without sleep or rest, in its eagerness to bear its part in what promised to be the crowning conflict of the war.

But each side having secured a strong position neither desired to bring on the conflict until its forces should be fully up, and so the two armies did not fall a-fighting again until about four o'clock in the afternoon of the second day—July 2, 1863. Then Longstreet with his Confederates fell upon Sickles with

a fury that only a seasoned corps could have withstood for a moment. Sickles occupied a line of rather low-lying hills that stretched diagonally across between the Federal and Confederate positions. His left wing having no natural obstacle to rest upon, was bent back toward Little Round Top, thus presenting an angle to the enemy.

Upon this angle Longstreet's veterans were hurled with determination, while a part of his corps—Hood's fierce fighting Texans, and that most desperate of rowdy corps, Wheat's Louisiana Tigers—passing around the flank of it, made a determined attempt to seize Little Round Top, a position from which, had they secured it, their guns could have swept a large part of the Federal line with a destructive enfilade fire. General Warren saw the danger in time and moved a heavy force toward the coveted hill, including a battery whose guns the men dragged by hand up the steep and into position.

Hood's men pressed on in face of the fire opened upon them, and with a desperate determination rarely equaled even in this war, endeavored to conquer the position in a hand to hand struggle. The men on both sides saw the vital importance of the position and fought for its possession like so many war-drunken demons. They fought hand to hand, using bayonets when too close together to load and fire. They brained each other with the butts of their muskets. They assailed each other with bowie knives. They even resorted to the use of stones, hurling them in each other's faces and breaking each other's skulls with heavy boulders.

In the end Hood's attack was baffled, and Warren held the hill. But for his alertness in seeing the necessity and his wonderful determination in seizing the opportunity, the battle must have been lost then and there; for, with his guns planted on Little Round Top, Lee could quickly have compelled the whole Federal line to retire and seek some other field of fighting.

Probably in all the course of the war the margin between victory and defeat was never at any point narrower than it was in that desperate struggle for possession of Little Round Top, about sunset on the second day of July, 1863. Never anywhere, before or since, was there fiercer fighting. Never anywhere did soldiers give a better account of themselves. Officers, from lieutenants to generals, fell in numbers by the side of their enlisted men, and over the whole slope the ground was strewn with the dead and the dying. Some of them wore the blue, and some of them the gray—about equal numbers in each uniform—but all of them were Americans and the memory of their heroism is the common heritage of all the people of the great Republic.

During these two days of terrific fighting the Federals had got distinctly the worst of it. The Confederates had not won a victory, but they had at any rate secured advantages that might well give their adversaries pause.

General Meade called a council of war after the firing ceased on the night of the second. He has himself declared that he had no thought of retreating after the fashion that had been established by usage

in the Army of the Potomac. General Meade's truthfulness is wholly above suspicion. But General Doubleday has pretty conclusively shown that General Meade's memory was at fault in this and that his object in calling the council of war was to take the opinions of his lieutenants as to whether he should withdraw from the Gettysburg position—as the Army of the Potomac had withdrawn from so many others after being worsted in battle—or should stay there and fight the matter out.

However that may be—and historically it does not matter—it was decided to stay there, and the night was spent by both armies in diligent preparation for a renewal of the desperate and not unequal conflict on the morrow. Every man and every gun that was within reach was brought into position. Every inch of advantageous ground that either side commanded was occupied to the full. Every preparation that either of those titanic forces could make for the morrow was made. It was at last the fixed purpose of each of these great armies to give battle to the other in a final contest for supremacy, in full conviction that the whole question at issue between the warring sections was deliberately staked upon the outcome of this one desperate struggle.

And indeed the stake was no whit less than that. It was obvious that should Meade beat and crush Lee on this decisive battlefield, the very existence of the Southern Confederacy would be at an end; the road to Richmond would be open to any single army corps that might be sent to undertake the conquest of the Confederate capital, while a dozen or a score of

strong divisions could easily be sent on that task if necessary. On the other hand if Lee could have crushed Meade in this battle Washington would have been his for the taking, while Baltimore, Harrisburg, Philadelphia, and New York would have been helpless to offer any resistance which need in the least check or embarrass him. In either case the war must have come to a hurried end.

Thus, when it was decided to renew the battle on the field of Gettysburg on the third of July, 1863, the stakes of the war game included all that there was of a cause on either side.

Lee was in a position in which he must take supreme risks. Therein only lay his hope. Meade was in a very different case. He might fall back and still reserve to himself the opportunity to fight again with hope of success. It is in no way astonishing that Meade hesitated, called a council of war, and asked for the advice of his major generals as to whether he should risk the whole Federal cause upon the issue of a single and very uncertain battle with such an adversary as Lee, or should withdraw and adopt a defensive attitude.

On the other side Longstreet strongly advised Lee against giving battle in this position. Longstreet thought Lee had accomplished enough. He thought also that by shifting the position it was easily possible for Lee to put himself in better and his adversary in much worse case, for fighting, before bringing on the battle.

Whether Longstreet's counsels were wise or otherwise, only skilled military critics are competent to

determine; and even their determination must always be open to doubt, especially as Longstreet's support of Lee's plan of battle seems to have lacked something of efficiency—the lack of which may have been determinative of results.

At any rate Lee decided to give battle, and he made his dispositions accordingly. He had already assailed both flanks of the Federal army and found both too strongly posted to be successfully turned or crushed. He decided, therefore, to hurl his entire strength directly against the Federal line in the hope of breaking it and thus driving his enemy into disorderly retreat.

It was a desperate thing to do, but Lee knew the fact, which has since been recorded by a historian on the other side, that the soldiers under his command were "the best infantry on earth" and he hesitated not to exact of them the most desperate and terrific work. He knew at least that these men would do and dare anything and everything in an attempt to carry out his will and achieve the ends he purposed.

He assembled a hundred guns on Seminary Ridge, each so well manned as to be capable of firing from four to six times a minute. In answer the Federals on Cemetery Ridge assembled about a like number of guns, equally well served.

The greatest artillery duel that had ever occurred was waged on that morning. Nearly a thousand shells a minute were launched upon their life-destroying career. Guns were knocked from their carriages, only to be replaced by other guns for which there had been no firing room before. Cannoneers were swept

away like flies, and their places were promptly taken by other cannoneers who eagerly and clamorously claimed the privileges of the conflict. Caissons were exploded by bursting shells and other caissons moved into their places with the precision of mathematics itself.

The Army of Northern Virginia and the Army of the Potomac had learned their business. The men who composed them now were soldiers, drilled, trained, battle-seasoned and thoroughly hardened to their work by long and varied experience. Whatever it was possible for courage and endurance to accomplish, that they were ready to undertake. They no more thought of reckoning the personal danger than of calculating the wanderings of the stars in their courses. They stood their ground, nothing daunting them and nothing suggesting to their minds a thought of running away. Is it any wonder that when such men composed the opposing armies, the fighting was such as to make men admire and angels weep?

The one thing that made the greater battles of the Confederate war terrible was this fact that the two armies were equally American in their composition, equally determined, equally heroic in daring and in enduring.

While all this fury of artillery fire continued, the infantry on either side lay flat on their bellies, taking advantage of every smallest inequality of the ground, and waiting for the serious work of war to begin. For by this time every soldier in either of these armies knew all there was to know about war's work, and

every one of them knew that this terrific artillery bombardment—the greatest that had ever occurred since cannon were invented—was merely preliminary to that onset of the infantry which was presently to determine which of these two great armies should have the mastery and which should be destroyed.

After two hours or more of this work with the guns, there came Pickett's charge—one of the very gallantest endeavors in all the history of war—having for its only rival in heroic determination the six successive charges of Federal troops up Marye's Heights at Fredericksburg.

Fourteen thousand of Lee's "best infantry on earth" were set to make this onslaught. Their task was about the most difficult and terrible one that had been anywhere undertaken during the war. There was a full mile of open country lying between the line from which they moved and the line which they were called upon to assault. Every inch of that mile of open space was swept by the fire of a hundred guns served as guns were rarely served before or since. It was in face of this veritable "fire of hell" that these fourteen thousand men were required to traverse a mile of space and then assail an entrenched and strongly posted enemy like unto themselves in courage, determination and all soldierly qualities.

They went to this work with unfaltering courage, and at the end of it all a new chapter had been added to the history of heroism.

The moment Pickett's men began their mile long charge, the Federal cannon—about a hundred guns—resumed their fire while the Confederate artillery

must of course cease firing lest their shells plow through the ranks of their own infantry. In spite of all, and in face of a hailstorm of shot and shell the Confederates steadily advanced. Great rents were made in their lines by the explosion of shells, but the gaps thus made were instantly closed up, and not for one moment did the assaulting force recoil, or halt or slacken the eager rapidity of its advance. As it drew near to the enemy's lines the Federal fire was changed from shell and shrapnel to canister in double and triple charges—each gun hurling from a quart to a gallon of balls every few seconds into the faces of the still advancing and still cheering Confederates. Presently, when the Southerners drew still nearer to the lines, a great body of Federal infantry that had been lying down and sheltering itself, rose and poured murderous volleys into the ranks of the assailants.

Those ranks were withering now, under the destructive fire, but still they faltered not nor failed. Still they went forward to execute Lee's will, which meant to them quite all that the will of God means to the devotee.

They trampled over the advance lines of the enemy. They pushed forward to the breastworks. They even crossed the fortifications and for a brief space held the lines they had been sent to conquer.

But so depleted were their ranks by this time, and so strangely unsupported were they by those other divisions which they had expected Longstreet to send in after them, and which he did not send in, that they were at last forced back by sheer weight of numbers.

A small remnant of that splendid charging column

returned to Lee's lines under a withering fire. The rest of it lay dead or dying on the hillside.

It has always been a fact highly creditable to American armies that the killed and wounded among their officers of high rank in every severe conflict relatively outnumber the casualties among the enlisted men. At Gettysburg, on both sides, this was conspicuously the case. On the Federal side General Reynolds was killed early on the first day of the fight. Later General Weed was mortally wounded; General Vincent and Colonel O'Rorke were killed. So were General Zook and Colonel Cross, while General Sickles lost a leg. In the third day's fighting Generals Hancock, Doubleday, Gibbon, Warren, Butterfield, Stannard, Brooke and Barnes were wounded; General Farnsworth was killed. On the Confederate side the number of killed and wounded among officers of high rank was equally great. General Barksdale fell, leading his men in terrific assault. General Armistead was shot to death as he laid his hand upon a Federal gun, and in Pickett's matchless charge, very nearly every officer, high and low, was either killed or wounded. Their men were not sent into the conflict; they were led into it, and between those two things there is a world of difference.

Longstreet has criticised Lee for ordering Pickett's charge. On the other hand Longstreet has been severely criticised for not having supported that charge with all his might, pushing forward every man he could command to take the places of Pickett's killed and wounded and to crown their superb endeavor with compulsory success. Again Lee has been

criticised for having given Ewell, in command of his left wing, uncertain and discretionary orders, instead of directing him, at the time of Pickett's charge, to hurl his whole force upon the enemy in his front, regardless of all other considerations. These matters are open questions that belong to military criticism rather than to history. They need not be discussed in these pages. But it belongs to history to relate that when the struggle was at an end, and the people of the South manifested a disposition to hold Longstreet responsible for its failure to accomplish the results intended, Lee promptly and definitely took upon himself all there might be of blame for the miscarriage of his plans. In a letter to President Davis he wrote protesting that the responsibility was all his own, and asking that some younger and fitter man than himself should be appointed to succeed him in command of that splendidly devoted and unfaltering army which he had so often led to victory but on this occasion had led to something akin to defeat and disaster.

There could scarcely be a stronger contrast than that between Lee's generous refusal to have any of his lieutenants held responsible for the results of a battle which he had authority to direct and Hooker's endeavor to shift to the shoulders of his subordinates the responsibility for his phenomenal failure at Chancellorsville. Lee was a great man, Hooker fell far short of that measure.

Gettysburg was, like Sharpsburg or Antietam, technically a drawn battle. Neither side had won a recognizable victory. Neither army had driven its adversary from the field. Neither had destroyed or

even seriously impaired the fighting capacity of the other. Neither had triumphed over the other. But the result at Gettysburg as at Antietam was that Lee's invasion of the North was brought to naught. In the one case as in the other the Confederate hope of compelling terms of peace was defeated by successful resistance. To that extent at least the battle had resulted in victory for the Federal arms.

When the fourth of July dawned, neither army cared to assail the other. All day they confronted each other sullenly, as they had done at Sharpsburg. Then Lee slowly and deliberately withdrew, as he had done on the former occasion, his enemy not having confidence or strength enough to interfere in any active way with his retirement. Lee's ammunition was so far exhausted that many of his divisions had only one round of cartridges, while many of his batteries had none at all. But so terrible had been his onset, and so greatly did his foe dread a further conflict with him, that after taking his own time in the enemy's country in which to determine what he would do, he moved to the Potomac practically unmolested, rested there because of high water, still unmolested, and finally returned to Virginia. Meade slowly and quite inoffensively followed. The two armies resumed their old positions on the Rappahannock and the Rapidan and neither ventured to assail the other during the remainder of that summer or autumn.

Here was another of those strange pauses in the war which history finds it difficult to explain. The first battle of Manassas was fought on the twenty-first of July, 1861. There was no further battling of

consequence during that summer or autumn. The battle at Sharpsburg was fought at the middle of September, 1862; there was no further fighting until the middle of December following. The Gettysburg battle was fought during the first three days of July, 1863, and throughout the long summer and autumn that followed there was no activity on either side. Not until May of the following year did the armies that confronted each other in Virginia meet again in conflict.

The wherefore of this inactivity has never been explained.

But meanwhile events of the utmost importance were occurring at the South and West, which claim attention in another chapter.

CHAPTER XXXIX

The Campaign of Vicksburg

After Shiloh, Grant was left, as he himself has told us, in a state of grave uncertainty as to the limits of his command, and even as to the question whether or not he had any command. After Halleck was transferred to Washington and placed in the position of General in Chief, things at the West did not much mend. We have seen how Grant at Corinth was slowly stripped of his forces and compelled to stand mainly upon the defensive in a field where offense, instant and vigorous, was obviously called for.

After the fall of Memphis, New Orleans, and Baton Rouge, the Confederates were left in possession only of that part of the Mississippi river which lies between Vicksburg and Port Hudson. Their possession of that stretch of river was doubly important to them. Defensively, it enabled them to blockade the river and render it a no-thoroughfare to Federal troops and supplies. Still more importantly, it enabled them to maintain their communications with the country lying to the west of the Mississippi in Arkansas, Louisiana, and Texas. From that region they drew a very important part of their food supplies. These came to Vicksburg by water or over the Shreveport railroad on the west of the river, and were carried from Vicksburg eastward by other lines of railroad. A still more important line of communi-

cation was that by way of the Red river, which empties into the Mississippi from the westward between Vicksburg and Port Hudson.

To hold these routes seemed almost an absolute necessity to the Confederates. To cut them and open the Mississippi river from Cairo to the Gulf was equally a necessity to the Federals.

Here were the conditions that rendered a campaign inevitable, and in a degree marked out its course and character. The Confederates energetically fortified Vicksburg and Port Hudson, and planted posts at various other points on both sides of the Mississippi and on the Arkansas and Red rivers. The Federals had made several attempts—one of them made by Farragut himself—to open the Mississippi, but had completely failed, largely because the Confederate fortifications at Vicksburg were perched so high upon the bluff that Farragut's guns could not be sufficiently elevated to reach them.

It was not until the twelfth of November, 1862, that General Grant was set free to do those things which it was necessary to do in this quarter of the country. On that date he received a dispatch from General Halleck, giving him command of all troops in his department, and authorizing him to conduct operations there on his own judgment. Thus armed with liberty to act, Grant instantly consulted Sherman, in whose sagacity and in whose superb fighting qualities he had the utmost confidence. These two energetic commanders quickly agreed upon a plan of action which looked to nothing less than the capture of Vicksburg and Port Hudson, the opening

of the great river throughout its length, and the severance of the Confederacy in twain.

Their plan at first was that Grant, with about 30,000 men, should move against the Confederate General Pemberton, who had about an equal force in the Tallahatchie river country, and occupy him there while Sherman, with 30,000 more, should descend the Mississippi in transports, convoyed by the gunboats, and effect a landing within striking distance of Vicksburg. Should Pemberton fall back for the defense of that stronghold, Grant was to press him with all possible vigor, endeavoring to cut him off from Vicksburg, and leave Sherman free to deal with that fortress as he pleased.

The Tallahatchie country, through which Grant marched to assail Pemberton, is a tangled wilderness, lying actually lower than the surface of the Mississippi, and itself laced by multitudinous rivers, creeks, and streams, all of them difficult of passage, even at times of lowest water, and impossible of passage when a rain or a break in a Mississippi levée suddenly raises them to flood height. The region is, in fact, a vast morass. In parts of it the planters were often left for six, eight or ten months without communication with the outer world, except by way of the rivers themselves, during the winter. It is not difficult, even for the reader who has no technical knowledge of war, to understand how slowly and painfully a march through such a country must be made, when not only the cannon but a wagon train, carrying every ounce of supplies necessary for 30,000 men must be dragged at every step through a quagmire.

But this was not Grant's chief difficulty. With his headquarters at Holly Springs, and a purpose to press forward in a southwesterly direction, he must maintain a long and attenuated line of communication with his base at Columbus, Kentucky. The Confederates were alert and ceaselessly active in assailing this line and rendering it hopelessly insecure. They sent heavy cavalry detachments under Van Dorn and Forrest to cut him off from his base, and Van Dorn, emboldened by repeated successes at last on the twentieth of December assailed Holly Springs itself, where Grant had accumulated many million dollars' worth of supplies in preparation for his campaign. The Confederate cavalrymen captured the town and its garrison, burned all the stores and destroyed the railroad buildings. In the meanwhile Forrest raiding farther north cut the railroad between Jackson, Tennessee, and Columbus, Kentucky, thus completely severing Grant's line, and leaving him in the enemy's country without supplies or the means of procuring them.

In order to save his army Grant immediately abandoned his plan of campaign and moved northwestward to Memphis. His purpose now was to join Sherman there, unite the two wings of the army, and in company with Sherman and the gunboats move down the river and assail Vicksburg in overwhelming force.

But when Grant reached Memphis Sherman had already gone down the river in his transports, accompanied by Porter's gunboats, to a point called Milliken's Bend. There on Christmas day Sherman

had landed on both sides of the river, sending the main body of his troops up the Yazoo, which empties from the northeast into the Mississippi near that point. He did this in order to assail the Confederates on the bluffs north of Vicksburg.

At this point a little topographical explanation seems necessary. Vicksburg lies on a great easterly bend of the river. It is perched upon high bluffs which extend thence northward to the Yazoo, striking it at a point called Haines's Bluff.

From Milliken's Bend above Vicksburg Sherman had sent a brigade down the western side of the river to cut the railroad leading from Shreveport, Louisiana, to that city. Landing his main force under the bluffs on the Yazoo, he hoped to march southward in the rear of Vicksburg, and cut the railroad which leads thence to Jackson, Mississippi, the state capital, about fifty miles away. If he could accomplish this he would have Vicksburg isolated from communication on either side of the river.

In all this he was instantly and completely baffled. Low grounds bordered the Yazoo at the point of landing, while the Confederates occupied and had cannon-crowned the bluffs at a little distance from the stream. The flat lands with their marshes were pestilential to the young men of the northwest who constituted Sherman's army. At times of high water the lowlands were often overflowed to a depth of ten feet. They were at all times malarial, and such water as could be had by digging a foot or two into the mucky soil was simply poisonous for human beings to drink. On the other hand, the Southerners on the

bluffs above were living in much more salubrious conditions. They had the advantage also of being immune by lifelong use to the miasms which laid so many of the Northern soldiers low. It is scarcely too much to say that the spores of miasmatic disease were at this time more important to the Confederates as a means of defense than their powder and bullets were.

Still further, Sherman had been misled and misinformed with regard to the character of the bluffs which he must assail. He had supposed them to be easily accessible to such lithe young fellows as those northwestern boys who constituted the pith and marrow of his army. He found them instead scarcely more accessible than the steeps of Gibraltar itself. And as at Gibraltar, so at this point the men standing upon the defense not only occupied the heights, but held their bases with a bristling row of well-served cannon, strongly supported by an infantry as good as any that ever fought. The approaches across bayous and creeks and broad marshes were narrow and difficult. The Confederates had fully made good their deficiency in numbers by so planting their cannon and their riflemen as to command these approaches completely.

It was on the twenty-ninth of December, 1862, that Sherman made his desperate attack. One brigade, by determined fighting, reached the foot of the bluffs but was instantly hurled back again, leaving five hundred of its men stark and stiff on the battlefield. At another point a regiment of daring fellows reached the base of the headland and found it impossible either to go forward or to retreat without invit-

ing destruction. The men dug rat holes for themselves at the base of the bluffs, and did what they could in the way of self-protection, while the Confederates on the cliffs above kept up a murderous vertical fire upon them throughout the day, until nightfall mercifully came and brought with it an opportunity for the Federals to retire.

In this struggle Sherman lost nearly two thousand men, while the Confederate loss was less than two hundred—one man killed on the one side to ten laid low on the other.

Sherman was a man not easily daunted. He was not yet ready to abandon his plan, to admit himself defeated or even to suspend his preternatural activity. He instantly decided upon still further assaults at other points. He arranged that the transports should carry the bulk of his army further up the river to Haines's Bluff during the night with the purpose of taking the Confederate works there by assault from the rear. There came a great fog so that the transports could not find their way, and so this plan miscarried.

By this time Sherman discovered that great bodies of Confederates were being hurried into the defensive works surrounding Vicksburg. He had previously heard nothing whatever from Grant, and it was only in this way that he learned that Grant had somehow failed to hold Pemberton in check, and that he, therefore, had in front of him the greater part of the Confederate army instead of the little garrison which he had set out to encounter and overcome.

Sherman was a man of wits and promptitude. He

wasted no time in speculation, but at once reëmbarked his troops and returned to the mouth of the Yazoo, thus abandoning as a failure the campaign which he had undertaken in full confidence that it would be crowned with distinguished success. He did not abandon the hope of ultimately reducing the Vicksburg stronghold, but for the time being he knew not how to go on with that enterprise with any tolerable prospect of success. He sat still, therefore, for a day or two, until on the fourth of January, 1863, General McClernand was placed in command of the forces which Sherman had previously controlled.

Many little actions followed, most of them directed to the purpose of breaking up small tributary Confederate posts and fortresses on the Arkansas river and elsewhere in the neighborhood. In these little operations the Federals were in the main successful, but as yet they had achieved nothing that seriously threatened the integrity of the Confederate position at Vicksburg, and that alone was the real object of their persistent endeavors.

Then came Grant. His coming opened a new chapter in the war for the possession of the Mississippi river. He brought to bear upon the problem all that superb determination, that dauntless courage and that splendid obstinacy which afterward won for him his place in history.

He had no particular plan at first, because he was not yet familiar with the terms and conditions of the problem he was set to solve. But he intended to take Vicksburg, and he did not intend to fritter away the energies of his army in little side expeditions which

in no important way could affect the general result. He called in all the troops who had been sent by McClernand to unimportant points and set himself at work to find a way of conquering the stronghold, the conquest of which was the sole object of his campaign.

The difficulties that presented themselves were many and exceedingly great. While Vicksburg, itself, was perched upon high hills, every conceivable road to it lay through swamps and morasses naturally defended by streams that were bottomed with unfathomable mud.

The best approaches to the town were from points farther down the river, but except by desperate endeavor it was impossible to reach those approaches so long as the works at Vicksburg completely commanded the stream. Grant was satisfied that if he could reach any point on the river below Vicksburg where a landing was practicable he could march thence into the rear of the town and compel its surrender.

In order to accomplish this he sent McClernand and Sherman to cut a canal across the peninsula made by the great bend in the river west of Vicksburg. This effort proved a failure, partly through engineering difficulties and partly because there were bluffs on the eastern side of the river below Vicksburg, which the Confederates promptly fortified and armed in such fashion as to command the outlet of the proposed canal.

Grant soon saw that even if he should succeed in making this canal cut-off, he must still find himself confronted on the river bank by heavily armed and high-placed works as difficult for his flotillas to pass as were the bluffs at Vicksburg itself.

He continued the work, however, in despair of anything better to do until early in March when a sudden flood in the Mississippi completely overflowed the peninsula on which the Federals were working, and compelled Sherman to withdraw hastily to save his army from drowning.

Grant's next scheme was by cutting another canal to carry his flotilla through Lake Providence west of the Mississippi, and thence by way of the many navigable bayous in that quarter to a point on the river well below Vicksburg. A good deal of digging was done in an attempt to carry out this plan, but in the end it failed as completely as the former one had done.

Grant now turned his attention to possibilities on the eastern side of the Mississippi. By blowing up a levée he tried to open again an old and abandoned waterway from the Mississippi into the Yazoo river, by way of the Tallahatchie and Yalobusha rivers. Those two streams unite at Greenwood to form the Yazoo river. They are narrow, tortuous, uncertain of channel, and densely wooded along their banks. The Confederates with their ceaseless and alert activity swarmed on the banks of these rivers, and obstructed them not only by the fire of sharpshooters, and now and then of a field battery, trained against the advancing flotilla, but still more effectively by felling trees into the stream and thus rendering it impassable. Presently Grant found also that the Confederates were engaged in a system of defense still more dangerous to him than this. While obstructing his pathway down these streams in the way described they

were also felling trees into the channels in the rear of his flotilla, and constructing strong earthworks along the banks above him. It was obvious that he must withdraw at once from his perilous position or encounter something worse than a mere risk of capture.

The work of extricating himself was difficult, but with strong reinforcements continually coming to him Grant succeeded in accomplishing it.

Still he did not abandon his hope of getting into the rear of Vicksburg by some movement from the north. The Yazoo river was connected by many bayous and other watercourses on the west of Haines Bluff with its tributary, the Big Sunflower. Grant decided to go up the Yazoo to Steele's Bayou and to go on up that watercourse, through some difficult passes into the Big Sunflower; thence he planned to descend the last-named stream, and strike the Yazoo again above the fortifications at Haines Bluff. If he could accomplish this he would have an open and comparatively easy road into the rear of Vicksburg.

This effort was met and baffled, as the former one had been, by Confederate obstructions in the streams, and by ceaseless annoyance from the woodlands on the banks. So active were the Confederates that at one time Commodore Porter seriously contemplated the abandonment of all his gunboats and transports. His energy, however, and his wonderful skill in navigation saved him at last from this humiliating necessity. By backing through streams in which there was not room enough to turn around, he managed at last to retreat lobster fashion, through thirty miles of

tangled and crooked waterways, under a constant and galling fire from the banks, and in the end to get back into openly navigable waters.

As a wise and discreet commander, it was Grant's habit to adopt those measures which promised success at the smallest cost of human life—these first. But as a man of indomitable courage and determination, it was his habit also, if the less costly method failed, to venture upon more desperate courses with a single-minded determination to accomplish his purposes at whatever hazard and whatever sacrifice. He was convinced now, that in order to conquer the stronghold at Vicksburg he must manage in some way to place his army on the river bank below that city in some position from which he could march into its rear. To do this involved a world of difficulty, incredible hardship, and immeasurable danger. He must somehow get his army past the town, and into a position where it would be hopelessly dependent upon such stores as he could carry with him for the maintenance of his troops from day to day.

In order to reach such a position he must take incredible risks, and, having attained it, he must find himself isolated without communications of any sort, and dependent upon complete and quick success for the very existence of his army. Having once placed himself in that position he must promptly conquer Vicksburg, or ingloriously surrender all his force.

Fortunately, he had for his coadjutor one of the most enterprising and most daring men who ever commanded a ship. David D. Porter, in his personal character, was typical of that all-unfaltering courage

which the officers of the American navy have always exacted of each other and of themselves as the measure of a man. Porter was ready for anything. Cool-headed, skilled in navigation, resolute, and thoroughly familiar with the problems of the Mississippi, he responded instantly and eagerly to Grant's demand that he should run his fleet past the Vicksburg batteries at any and every hazard and place it in a position below, where the gunboats might serve as transports to the troops if Grant could manage to get the troops there.

This thing was splendidly done, and perhaps nothing more picturesque or dramatic occurred during the war. Porter chose the night, of course, for his attempt, but the Confederates on the shore had long anticipated some such enterprise and had prepared themselves to overcome the difference between night and day. They had collected great piles of lumber on the banks; they had filled many houses with combustibles, and to all these they instantly set fire when it was known that the fleet was endeavoring to pass the batteries. The river and the entire landscape were rendered lurid by the flames. The men behind the guns on shore were enabled to deliver their fire as accurately as if the sun had been shining. The fleet, in the meanwhile, replied to every shot as it steadily steamed by, and in spite of the hellish appearances the losses on either side were trifling.

In the meanwhile Grant had moved on the western side of the Mississippi, from Milliken's Bend to a point opposite Grand Gulf. There he found the Confederates strongly fortified, but by moving down

the river to Bruinsburg he succeeded in getting his army across on the thirtieth of April.

If the reader will now look at a map, remembering that Vicksburg and Port Hudson were both held by the Confederates, and that the regions along the river bank on the western side of the stream were quagmires, traversed at every step by impassable streams and bayous, he will have some conception of the boldness of this movement of Grant's. The great fighter had deliberately carried his army into a position where he had no possibility of communication with any base of supplies in either direction. He had cut himself off from all help and must henceforth rely exclusively upon himself. He had put himself in a position where victory was the only alternative to destruction. During all the course of the war no other general on either side ventured upon so desperate a risk as this.

Having marched over difficult roads, and by circuitous routes, Grant had brought with him, of course, supplies of food and ammunition sufficient only for a very brief campaign. For further food than this he must depend upon a country by no means rich in supplies at any time, which had already been stripped nearly bare by the requisitions of his adversary. For ammunition, beyond the store that he had in his caissons and cartridge boxes, he had no supply-source at all. To employ the old metaphor of war history, he had completely burned his ships and his bridges behind him. But at least and at last he had succeeded in placing himself in a position from which he could operate in the rear of Vicksburg.

The Confederate general, Joseph E. Johnston—just recovered from the well-nigh mortal wound he had received at Seven Pines—had been sent to Jackson, Mississippi, less than fifty miles east of Vicksburg to take command of such forces as could be gathered there. He had in fact collected a considerable body of men whose numbers Grant could in no wise ascertain. Nevertheless, Grant determined to push his own army into a perilous position between that of Johnston at Jackson, and that of Pemberton near Vicksburg. He was aided in this by a great cavalry raid which had recently been made by Grierson from the north which swept through the Mississippi country, desolating it and occupying the attention of the Confederates in many quarters from which, but for this diversion, Johnston might easily have drawn reinforcements.

During the next two months the battling was well-nigh incessant, and the losses on both sides, though incurred in comparatively small engagements, amounted in the aggregate to those of a great contest. One considerable battle occurred on the fifteenth of May at Champion Hills. Having captured the city of Jackson and destroyed there everything that could aid the Confederates in their struggle, Grant had turned westward in a direct march toward Vicksburg. At Champion Hills he encountered Pemberton, who had taken up a strong position on high ground and who desperately resisted the Federal advance. After four hours of such fighting as only veterans could have done or stood, Pemberton retreated, leaving his dead, his wounded and thirty guns on the field. The

losses on either side were between twenty-five hundred and three thousand men. Yet this battle of Champion Hills is scarcely known by name to the millions of youths who every year pass their examinations in American history. A smaller but still considerable battle was fought on the Big Black river on the seventeenth, resulting in a loss of eighteen guns and two thousand men to the Confederates.

From that point Pemberton retired to Vicksburg and Grant following, closely besieged that city. In the meanwhile his operations had been so far successful that he was now in command of a point on the Yazoo where he established a secure base of supplies.

In apprehension of an attack from Johnston in the rear, Grant made a tremendous effort on the twenty-second to carry the Vicksburg works by storm, but was beaten off with losses so heavy that he determined to settle down into regular siege operations.

During the period of this siege the situation in Vicksburg was appalling in an extreme degree. The Federal guns were near enough to pour a continuous stream of shells into the town, and they did so without pause, night or day. The inhabitants, including women and children, were ceaselessly under a fire that might well have staggered the courage even of veteran soldiers. No house in the town was for one moment a safe dwelling place, and for refuge the people dug caves in the cliffs and harbored there unwholesomely. In the meanwhile they were suffering under progressive starvation. The food supplies were daily dwindling, yet with splendid courage

those who were beleaguered in the city maintained their cheerfulness to the end, as is testified by files of that daily journal printed upon the back of wall paper which appeared at its appointed time every day and in spite of all, until the end.

The end came on the fourth of July, one day after the failure of Lee's final assault at Gettysburg.

Pemberton surrendered unconditionally, and Grant generously directed that the surrendered men should first be fed and then paroled and permitted to return to their homes.

One event which belongs rather to biography than to history may perhaps be mentioned here in illustration of General Grant's delicacy of sentiment,—a trait in his character often overlooked. When it was arranged that the surrendered Confederates should march out, General Grant issued an order to forbid all demonstrations that might wound a conquered enemy's pride or sensitiveness. "Instruct the commands," the order read, "to be orderly and quiet as these prisoners pass, and to make no offensive remark."

Thus at Vicksburg, as at Appomattox many months later, that soldier who has been accounted the least sensitive of all to considerations of sentiment, manifested a generous delicacy to which all honest minds must make reverent obeisance. During his correspondence with Pemberton concerning the surrender, Grant had declined to consider any terms that limited or imposed conditions upon the capitulation. But he had also generously written to his adversary as follows: "Men who have shown so much endur-

ance and courage as those now in Vicksburg will always challenge the respect of an adversary, and I can assure you that you will be treated with all the respect due to prisoners of war."

Grant's supplies, in his difficult position, were meager in the extreme, and it is one of the most touching incidents of the war that his men voluntarily furnished from their own haversacks the food their famished enemies needed, thus cutting off their own dinners in order that these starving foes might not longer suffer the pangs of hunger. Such incidents go far to redeem war from its curse of brutal barbarity.

Five days after the fall of Vicksburg, Port Hudson was surrendered, and in Mr. Lincoln's own phrase, thenceforth the Mississippi "flowed unvexed from its source to the sea." The Confederacy was cut in twain. The end seemed to be foreordained beyond peradventure, but the determined courage and endurance of the Confederates was destined to postpone that end for nearly two years longer.

The result of this campaign taken in connection with the baffling of Lee's invasion of the North at exactly the same time, in effect determined the issue of the war. From that hour forward, as we now see, it was certain that the Federal cause must ultimately triumph; but how and at what cost remained in the womb of fate.

Grant's conquest of Vicksburg and of the Mississippi river was a result inestimably valuable to the Federal cause if viewed only in its strategic, geographical and other external aspects. But it bore one

other fruit of immeasurably greater importance even than these things. It discovered to the government at Washington the existence and the capacity of a commander capable of measuring swords with Robert E. Lee. It taught the authorities at Washington at last the lesson which ought to have been learned by them many moons earlier, namely that in Grant the nation had at its service a man great enough to understand the war problem and to solve it—a man capable of clearly seeing and perfectly understanding that the Confederate strength lay in the fighting force of the Southern armies, rather than in the possession of strategic positions—a man fit to use the enormously superior resources of the North in men, money and material, in such fashion as to break the resisting power of the Army of Northern Virginia.

Grant was eminently a man of common sense rather than of imagination. The picturesque and the romantic appealed to him scarcely at all. War was to him a problem in physics. It was his habit of mind when any undertaking was set for him to do, carefully to weigh the means at his command and the means at the command of his enemy, and judiciously to employ whatever superiority of means he possessed for the accomplishment of the purposed end. There had been much strategy of another sort than this employed in the conduct of the war on the Federal side. There had been much of sentiment brought to bear ineffectually, and often with disastrous results. With the coming of Grant the turn of common sense had come, and Grant preëminently represented common sense, backed by daring, determination and tireless energy.

After Vicksburg the days of the dominance of Halleck and his kind were numbered. The time was approaching when capacity was to take command in lieu of regularity; when sense was to replace shoulder straps; when the man under the uniform was to count for more than the uniform. The Galena clerk, Ulysses S. Grant, was a few months hence to succeed to the command of all the armies of the United States, replacing the pet of an antiquated system.

Two thirds of a year were yet to elapse before this change in the administration of Federal military affairs should completely take place, but its coming was sure and with it the beginning of an end to a struggle which had already cost the country much of its best blood and untold millions of its treasure.

To the nation the best result of the Vicksburg campaign was its discovery of Grant.

CHAPTER XL

The State of Things After Gettysburg

The summer of 1863 presented the most interesting epoch of the war. The baffling of Lee's second attempt to invade the North left the struggle in Virginia about as it had been before, except that Lee's veteran army continued to grow steadily stronger in morale and weaker in numbers. The operations at the West, however, had been very disastrous to the Confederates, Their chief city had been taken and was firmly held. Their armies had been driven out of Missouri, Kentucky and the greater part of Tennessee. The Mississippi river had been completely wrested from their possession and the Confederacy had been cut in two.

Some critics, writing at a later time, have held that these conditions demanded the abandonment of the Confederate cause, and called for a suit for peace on the part of the Southerners, upon whatever terms the Federal Government might be willing to grant. Those who take this view do so, it would seem, upon inadequate conceptions of the conditions and the facts. Had the South been a European country, with all its problems of military geography wrought out, with its strategic positions marked upon myriads of maps, with all lines of communication definitely settled and fixed, the situation at midsummer in 1863

might well have justified an opinion of this kind. But none of these conditions existed. The South was still possessed of a vast area unplatted for military purposes, abounding in obstacles that might be made effective against any adversary's advance. Still more important, there remained the spirit of the army and an unconquerable determination on the part of the people to exhaust every conceivable resource before surrendering a cause which they believed to be absolutely and eternally right.

They had been fed in childhood and youth upon the memories and traditions of American history; they had learned well the lesson that the battle is not always to the strong; they did not forget those dark hours of the American Revolution when Washington, with a small, ragged and mutinous army, lay at Valley Forge while the British occupied New York and Philadelphia and were threatening to overrun Virginia, Georgia and the Carolinas. It was their fixed belief that their own cause in this Confederate war was identical with that of their Revolutionary forefathers, and they would have held themselves in contempt had they shown a readier spirit of surrender than that of the earlier Americans. They remembered how even after the British had conquered Charleston and Savannah, and with superior forces had overrun Georgia and the Carolinas, some mere handfuls of determined men under Marion, Sumter, Pickens, Horry and their kind, had kept war alive in those regions until such time as Greene should come and by masterful strategy make his own defeats more effective than victories, and ultimately recon-

quer their country from its conquerors, thus making American independence possible. The Confederate people, in their manhood, believed in and acted upon that American history which they had learned in their youth. Reverses only stimulated them to new endeavors, and a more heroic endurance.

Finally, there remained the Army of Northern Virginia, under command of Robert E. Lee. For them to have abandoned their cause while such an army under such a commander was still in the field would have been a confession of weakness and cowardice wholly beyond conception by such men. The war was not yet over. The men who were fighting it on the side of the South were still so potent in arms that in that very month of July, 1863, the Government of the United States found it necessary to resort to an enforced draft in order to raise the 300,000 men called for three months before, to reinforce armies that already outnumbered those of the South by two to one and more.

So far was the Confederacy at that time from defeat and the necessity of surrender that for a space it was exceedingly uncertain whether or not the North would furnish the quotas now called for. So small was the confidence of the North in the administration, and in the success of its methods, that in some parts of the country volunteering had practically come to an end.

As has been pointed out in a former chapter, there was a party at the North, only slightly inferior in strength to that of the administration, which determinedly opposed the further prosecution of the war.

This opposition was in part political and in part economic. On its economic side it enlisted all those men who had business interests or business hopes connected with the Southern trade. On its political side it included all men at the North who were opposed to the policies and the principles of the Republican party. It included also a vast multitude of men who had from their youth up hated Abolitionism, and detested the thought of negro equality in this land.

Still another force, and not a small one, had its influence. There were men of earnest minds, throughout the North, who seriously apprehended the undermining of the Constitution and the destruction of liberty in our country by the exercise of what are called war powers. These men were genuinely and patriotically alarmed when they saw the power of the National Government used to suspend the habeas corpus—that traditional bulwark of personal liberty the existence of which has been for many centuries regarded by all English-speaking men as their most priceless possession. When these men saw in addition a declaration of martial law, and the establishment of a system of passports as rigid as that of any military despotism, and when at last they saw the administration openly assuming and exercising the power of overturning the institutions of states by mere executive proclamation, they grew gravely alarmed for liberty itself. To them it seemed—rightly or wrongly—that in the struggle to free the negro slaves of the South there was very serious danger of incurring the loss of liberty to all men in this Republic. Being unwilling to exchange all that is fundamental in the

Republic for the freeing of some negro slaves these earnest thinkers,—whether mistakenly or not,—opposed with all their might the further progress of the war and sought in every legal and constitutional way to make an end of it.

This then was the situation. The North had armies in the field vastly outnumbering those of its adversary and immeasurably better equipped and supplied. But public sentiment at the South was a unit, while the North in its political views was a house divided against itself. For the South to have abandoned its cause at such a time and under such circumstances merely by reason of military reverses, when it still had in the field some hundreds of thousands of veteran troops, would have been an act of cowardice inconceivable to American men.

In New York City there was a complete failure to make adequate response to Mr. Lincoln's demand for further troops. Either the government must go without the important quota from the principal city in the nation, or else a draft must be ordered to make good the deficiencies in the volunteering. This Republic of ours had always thitherto depended upon the patriotism of its people for such strength as it might need in a fighting way. It had several times happened that during wars against foreign powers some parts of the country had manifested an unpatriotic lack of enthusiasm, and had failed to furnish their quotas of volunteers for the common defense. But there had been then no thought of dragging men unwillingly into the military service, although there had been great public indignation throughout the rest

of the country over the unpatriotic attitude of a part of the Union. The quotas that some of the states refused to furnish were made good by a larger volunteering in other parts of the country.

But in 1863 the conditions were radically different. The war for which the new levies were wanted was a war against Americans, and not for the defense of the nation against foreign powers. In the view of very many men it was, rightly or wrongly, regarded as a war instigated by a sectional, political party in the name of the nation for the destruction of all that was fundamental in the nation. The time has long gone by when it was worth while to argue the soundness or unsoundness of these opinions. It is necessary now only to record the fact of their existence in aid of an understanding of what happened.

The draft was begun in New York on the eleventh of July, 1863. That date fell upon a Saturday. The draft had been opposed in some of the newspapers and in public speeches as unconstitutional, and as an invasion of those private rights which free government is instituted among men to secure. There was murmuring and muttering throughout the Saturday's operations and by the time that Monday came there was throughout the city an aroused spirit of protest which threatened violence. That violence came with a vengeance when the draft was resumed on Monday. Angry crowds surrounded the offices in which the drawings were to be made. The street cars were stopped and their horses unhitched. Then the draft offices were invaded and sacked, and in some cases the buildings were set on fire. At one point an entire

block was burned by the mob; at another point there were battles fought between the populace and the police which rivaled in violence and in slaughter skirmishes on the lines in Virginia. Mobs filled the streets in every direction, and for a time had their own way. The office of the New York "Tribune" was assailed and it was defended only by running out chutes from which hand grenades could be dropped into the throngs below, and by arming the printers and other employees with muskets and abundant cartridges. The office of the "Evening Post" was defended against the mob by steam jets shot from hose attached to the boilers that worked the machinery and the presses.

In the meanwhile every negro who made his appearance in the street was assaulted and eleven of them fell victims to the anger of the populace. A negro orphan asylum in Fifth avenue at 44th street was sacked and burned by the infuriated rioters and its helpless little wards narrowly escaped by the way of back doors.

In Second avenue the police and soldiers were attacked from the windows and the roofs of houses. They quickly wreaked a terrible vengeance. They pushed their way into every house and every room of every house, assailed everybody they could find there, whether guilty or innocent of offense, thrust many of them through with bayonets without inquiring as to their degree of culpability, brained many others in like unquestioned manner with locust clubs, threw some of them over balusters upon the stones below, hurled some out of fourth and fifth story windows to

be crushed upon the pavement, followed the fleeing ones to the roofs, and shot them there as the most northern of northern historians has recorded—we quote his exact language—"refusing all mercy, and threw the quivering corpses into the street as a warning to the mob."

All this occurred more than forty-five years ago. The war which gave birth to such fury is a matter of history now, not of controversy. It is not worth while nearly half a century later to inquire too curiously into the rights and wrongs, or into the responsibilities involved in such things. But it is perhaps of human advantage, or at the least of curious historic interest, to note that all these things were done in professed service to that personal liberty which free government among men is instituted to secure.

From the point of view of the angels and other superior intelligences there could be nothing more gruesomely ludicrous than the attitude and condition of the American people on both sides of the war-drawn lines at that period. On both sides men professed and honestly believed that their supreme concern was for the maintenance—in Mr. Lincoln's phrase—of a "government of the people, by the people and for the people." Yet on each side there existed, and men consented to it, a military despotism as arbitrary, as unreasoning, and as tyrannical as that of Russia itself. On either side no man could travel without permission of some provost authority which there was nowhere any power to question or any court to curb. On either side that military power which our Constitution requires to be always subordinate to the

civil arm, had laid its iron hand without even the disguise of a velvet glove upon the fate and fortune and life of every citizen of a land supposed to be the freest on earth. In New York men could be butchered in their homes and thrown out of high windows without so much as the order of a sheriff in justification. In Richmond Winder's men made practical prisoners of all soldiers and citizens who undertook to traverse the streets upon however laudable an occasion.

It is always thus in war. No sooner is the military power invoked in aid of civil authority than it demands and enforces the abdication of all civil authority in so far as that authority may interfere in the slightest degree with its arbitrary execution of its own irresponsible will. So during this Confederate war of ours we see a great people, free by inheritance, free by tradition, and clamorously free by every conceivable act of self assertion throughout generations of history, suddenly and willingly surrendering to military despotism all that they had ever dreamed of, or clamored for, or fought for of personal right and immunity, and doing all this in the name and in behalf of liberty.

The despotism thus established at the South was more perfect and more arbitrary than that which fell upon the North because at the South there was practically no party in existence that antagonized the powers that were, while at the North there was such a party that must in some ways be reckoned with. Moreover, at the North the citizen who felt that he could not endure the despotism had at any rate the

option to flee from it, and take up his residence in some foreign country in which he might enjoy an actually greater personal liberty; while the Southerner who felt himself equally oppressed and wronged was completely shut in and compelled to submit.

In the contemplation of history these facts and conditions are curious and curiously interesting.

These were the conditions of the war at midsummer, 1863, after Lee's retirement from Gettysburg, and after the loss of Vicksburg, Port Hudson and the Mississippi river by the Confederates. They were certainly not conditions suggesting an abandonment of the struggle by either of the contestants, or at all clearly foreshadowing its end in victory for either. Anything in the way of results still remained possible. To hopeful minds on either side everything of good seemed likely to happen.

So the war went on.

CHAPTER XLI

The Struggle for Charleston

The Confederate war necessarily involved military operations at very widely separated points at one and the same time. The telling of its story, therefore, of necessity involves a good deal of harking back, as the huntsmen say.

While Lee's tremendous campaigns in Virginia, Maryland and Pennsylvania had been going on, and while Grant was engaged in conquering Vicksburg and reopening the Mississippi river, there was important fighting done at other points and particularly at Charleston in South Carolina.

The earliest efforts of the Federal Government to shut the Confederates in had been directed toward the closing of the port of Charleston. There first a blockading fleet had been established, and when it proved ineffective an effort had been made very early in the war to close the port by sinking hulks, loaded with stone in the main channels, leading into that harbor. Fortunately for all concerned, this effort permanently to close a commercial port failed completely and conspicuously. So far from obstructing the entrance to the harbor, the sinking of the hulks there had the effect of extensive dredging. The tide flows in and out of the port with a tremendous current which brooks no resistance. When the stone

laden hulks were sunk this current quickly swept away the sand and mud from beneath them, so that presently the harbor entrance was found to have been actually deepened by the effort to close it.

From that time forward two objects engaged Federal attention so far as Charleston was concerned; one of these was to maintain in front of the harbor a blockading squadron strong enough to prevent the entrance and exit of ships. The other was to force the harbor itself, capture its defenses and recover the city to Federal possession. In both of these efforts the Federal operations failed, but in their progress they involved some of the severest and most picturesque battling of the war.

The profits of blockade running were so great that English capitalists invested lavish sums in the business as a promising speculation. They built ships of light draft, great power, and a speed greater than that of any vessel in the American navy for the express purpose of carrying on this forbidden traffic. These ships had but little free-board exposed above the water. They were painted a dull sage green, as nearly as possible the color of the sea itself, when looked at from a distance. They were commanded by daring navigators and manned by equally daring crews who stood ready to take any and every risk that might aid in the achievement of ends so profitable as those aimed at in this commerce.

And those profits were tempting in an extraordinary degree. With cotton purchasable in the South for a few cents per pound, payable in the enormously depreciated Confederate currency, and salable in

England at almost incredibly high prices in gold, and with all forms of English-made goods bearing fabulous prices in the South, it was easily calculable that if a ship could complete one round trip from Nassau to Charleston and back again and then should be lost with all its cargo on a second attempt, there would still remain to the owners a profit of not less than a hundred per cent upon the money invested.

As a matter of fact the steamer Minho, and several others of the blockade runners continued until late in the war to make their trips successfully, almost with the regularity of packet boats. They carried into Charleston stores of quinine, opium and other drugs which the Confederate Government stood ready to buy at fabulous prices. They carried clothing also, and shoes and harness, all of which were eagerly purchased at any price that the importers might choose to charge. They carried out of Charleston the cotton to which the markets of the world were otherwise closed, and which could be purchased, therefore, at a price so low as to make its cost an inconsiderable fraction unworthy of consideration. So the blockade running went on.

So far as the reduction of the city and its defenses was concerned the failure of Federal efforts was still more pronounced. Great sums were expended, vast quantities of ammunition were wasted, and many lives were sacrificed in an effort—futile from beginning to end—to reduce this stronghold. Charleston, the birthplace of Secession and of the Confederate war remained in Confederate possession until the very end. The city did not fall under Federal control un-

til those closing days of the war when Sherman, after his march to the sea, began his final movement northward in rear of the Carolina port.

In the meanwhile the struggle at that point was marked by many fierce land contests in the country round about, and by much heroic naval fighting.

The Confederates made such endeavors as they could, with the meager means at hand, to create a naval power there which might be launched against the blockading fleet outside. There was no navy yard and no ship-building plant at Charleston, but with an energy that did credit to the men who exercised it, several small gunboats and torpedo boats were extemporized within the harbor and employed with energy and effect. In January, 1863, two of these extemporized gunboats boldly steamed out one morning, and assailed the Federal fleet lying off the harbor. They promptly disabled two of the Federal ships, and compelled them to strike their colors. But the rest of the enormous Federal fleet came quickly to the rescue and the two little gunboats were forced to retreat again, and take refuge under the guns of the forts.

This event gave warning at Washington of the necessity of promptly and greatly strengthening the naval force employed off Charleston. Accordingly, a powerful fleet, consisting of seven monitors, an ironclad frigate, an ironclad ram and many gunboats was sent in April, 1863, under command of Rear-Admiral S. F. Du Pont, to reduce and capture Charleston. The expedition failed in its purpose, as all previous ones sent with a like end in view had done, and as all future ones did to the very end.

It was on the seventh of April, 1863, that Du Pont, with his masterful armada, steamed into the harbor to reduce the forts and to sweep away all the defenses of Charleston. At every point he found himself under a destructive fire from forts and batteries occupied by men who knew how to shoot. At every point he found his pathway obstructed by chains and torpedoes and whatever else mechanical ingenuity up to that period in human history had succeeded in devising for the checking of an enemy's progress.

One of the Federal ironclads, the *Keokuk,* ventured too near Fort Beauregard, manned by Confederate volunteers who had practised with their cannon as they might have done with close range rifles until they could plant a shell wheresoever they desired. The commandant of the fort did not open fire upon the vessel until it had securely anchored itself, bow and stern, in a position from which its officers expected to make themselves quickly masters of the work. When they were thus securely fastened in position the commander of the fort gave the order to fire. Within the next minute or two the *Keokuk* was struck and penetrated by not less than 100 shells, ninety of which had passed through her sides below the water line and burst within her engine rooms. She went down as a cracked teapot might have done.

Another ironclad, the *Weehawken,* had been sent to lead the way, pushing a raft before her in order to explode all contact torpedoes before reaching them. As soon as she became involved in the chain and other defenses of the harbor a terrific fire was opened upon her and for half an hour she was threatened with the

fate of the *Keokuk*. At the end of that time she retired, baffled and beaten, and DuPont, seeing how completely his effort had failed, abandoned the purpose of taking Charleston or reducing its defenses by any sea attack. Nearly all of his vessels had been so far damaged as to be unfit for further use until repairs in them could be made. Most of the monitors had been completely disabled for effective action by the smashing of titanic shells against their turrets, which were bent and twisted in such fashion that they could no longer be revolved. Many of the ships of less formidable character had been altogether withheld from action in view of the terrific effectiveness of the Confederate fire. Finding that even his most powerful floating fighting machines were unable to resist the fire of the forts Du Pont wisely reserved his weaker vessels and kept them out of a contest in which they were so manifestly unfit to engage.

Thus came to an end the best planned and most capably conducted effort that was at any time made to conquer Charleston by sea. It was obvious from that time forth that if Charleston was to be taken at all it must be captured by other means than those of a flotilla attempting to force its way into the splendidly defended harbor.

With that patience and persistence which are dominant characteristics of the American mind the authorities at Washington set themselves at once at work to devise and use those other and slower, but more hopeful means of conquest. General Quincy A. Gillmore was assigned to this work. A large force was placed under his command and whatever

guns he needed were subject to his requisition. The monitors and other naval vessels were ordered to cooperate with him and act under his direction.

His plan was quickly and intelligently formed. Charleston lies upon a tongue of land between the Ashley and Cooper rivers which, uniting at the battery, form the bay exactly as the union of the North and East rivers does at New York. Indeed, a map of Charleston in outline differs from a map of New York only in one important particular, that the widening of the peninsula in its middle part occurs on one side in Charleston and on the opposite side in New York. South of the Ashley river the coast line sweeps in a semicircle trending northwards and bounded by James Island. That island is separated from the mainland by Wapoo Cut, which connects the mouth of the Ashley river with Stono Inlet. Stono Inlet separates James Island from John's Island and the mainland on the south, and its entrance is from the sea. On the eastern side of James Island there is an inlet known as Folly river which has many ramifications, and which in its general course cuts off from James Island a marsh known as Folly Island. This marsh lies along the ocean front very much as Sandy Hook does at the mouth of New York harbor. A narrow and shallow creek cuts Folly Island in two towards its northern end, and the space north of that creek is known as Morris Island. The northern end of Morris Island abuts upon the entrance to the harbor and commands it on the one side while Fort Moultrie on Sullivan's Island commands it on the other. Fort Sumter, built upon an artificial island in

the middle of the harbor, forms the third point in the triangle in which the Federal fleet had encountered such difficulty, and suffered such defeat.

General Gillmore's plan was to capture Morris Island, and gain possession of its northern extremity, known as Cummings's Point, where stood Battery Gregg, on guard against entrance to the harbor.

By an error in judgment the Confederates gave him his opportunity. They withdrew from the marsh known as Folly Island, where they might have defended themselves almost to the end of time. Gillmore was quick to see their mistake, and to take advantage of it. He instantly seized upon the southern end of Folly Island, and set to work to convert his troops into amphibians. In boats, on rafts and by wading through indescribable mud he pushed them northward to Morris Island.

In anticipation of this movement on his part, the Confederates had strengthened a battery on that island, and named it Fort Wagner. They had armed it with the best they had in the way of heavy guns, light guns and infantry forces of grandly desperate courage and determination. Here was to be fought out the question of the possession of Morris Island and the control of Charleston harbor.

The fighting in front of that work was, from the first, desperate in the extreme. In order to approach it at all the Federal troops were forced to wade waist deep in water, carrying their rifles above their heads. The first assault was made on the eleventh of July, 1863, and was aided by a terrific fire from the fleet. It was led by the first regiment of negroes that had

thus far actively participated in fighting in the war, and the conduct of those troops was worthy of the best traditions of battling. The assault was met in such fashion as to destroy the greater number of the assailants and hurl back the fragmentary remains of the column in confusion. So desperate was this endeavor and with such determination was the assault made that the Federals lost more than 1,500 men while inflicting a loss of less than one hundred upon their adversaries.

Having failed in direct assault General Gillmore determined to take Fort Wagner and the works north of it by regular siege approaches. General Gillmore was an engineer of the highest capacity and a soldier of the utmost courage, energy and determination. He drew his first parallel and mounted great siege guns upon it almost immediately. Then working under such cover as he could provide he established a second parallel, and opened fire from it on the twenty-third of July. He was advancing in this slow and perilous way over a narrow strip of land—a mere marsh scarcely at all elevated above the level of the surrounding waters. His sick list was from the first enormous, and day by day it grew as one man after another succumbed to the poisonous miasms of those pestilential swamps in which, until the time of the war no white man had ever dared spend a night between the first of June and the end of November. "Country fever"—believed by many physicians to be nothing less than yellow fever in its native and endemic form—slew far more of his troops than the shot and the shell and the bullets of his adversary did.

Nevertheless, like the soldier that he was, Gillmore pressed on, working his way inch by inch toward the hostile embankments.

Toward the last his lines were swept by a fire from a battery on James Island and by a cross fire of infantry and sharpshooters from a point in Fort Wagner itself. With the ingenuity of an accomplished engineer he protected his men against these special dangers by bringing up tubes of boiler iron through which the men were able to do their mining, moving them forward at night, in order to cover the space excavated by day.

In all the war no more desperate work was done than that of both the Federals and Confederates on the face of Fort Wagner. The fire was incessant and whether it came from siege guns, from field pieces, from rifles or from pistols held in the hand, it was all at pistol shot range. And it was all murderous in its effects. Yet on neither side was there for one moment a sign of flinching by day or by night. Many scores of men were shot through the body as they slept, and at no moment of the twenty-four hours was any man secure against this danger.

Little by little Gillmore got his great guns into position for breaching his enemy's works. The moving of each gun into its place cost scores of lives and every attempt to fire it must cost other scores. But here was work that must be done, and here were men resolute enough to do it.

On the seventeenth of August the great guns opened against Fort Wagner and Fort Sumter. Night and day for a full week the terrible conflict

continued. The walls of Fort Sumter were beaten into an amorphous mass of bricks and mortar, its guns were dismounted and its men dwelt ceaselessly under the fire of Gillmore's terrible instruments of death. Nevertheless, they stood firm, and held their position without faltering or failure. It is to be observed that the terror of this struggle was due to the fact that the men on the one side and on the other were of unconquerable spirit, and indomitable courage, and that to them the measure of danger served only to set a measure for endurance.

It should be stated here that in spite of the ruin of Fort Sumter's defenses, the Confederates continued to occupy that work, driving off several assaults that were afterwards made upon it. A little later Major, afterwards Brigadier General, Stephen Elliott, of South Carolina—a man almost womanly in his delicacy of demeanor, but lion-like in courage and activity—was sent to take command of the little infantry force which still held the ruins of the fort. With an enterprise that suggests a creative imagination on his part, he ordered cargoes of sand bags to be brought thither by night, and little by little with these, he reconstructed the frowning walls, and mounted upon them again the great guns that such a fort is supposed to carry.

His work was first revealed to the enemy in a dramatic and poetic way. When the time came for the Christmas salute in which the foes, as it were, lifted their caps to each other, the saluting was begun by the ships of the Federal fleet. One after another, as they lay in line, they fired the conventional number

of guns. Then the Confederate batteries took up the courteous work, each firing its quota. When the last one on the left of Sumter had fired it was supposed that the saluting would be continued by the next battery on the right of that ruined work. It was not dreamed on either side that Sumter had a single gun in position. But Elliott's work of reconstruction had been done. His guns were ready again for the fray. And in his turn he fired the Christmas salute, to the astonishment and admiration of all.

Then came one of the graceful courtesies of war. Under signal orders from the commandant of the Federal fleet every ship in the squadron dipped its flag in deference to Fort Sumter.

Here were brave men saluting brave men, and rejoicing in their courage and their enterprise although these were antagonistically employed. Perhaps no incident in all the war better illustrates than this one does the sympathy that brave men feel for brave men, irrespective of the lines of conflict drawn between them.

As he approached Fort Wagner General Gillmore was forced to work upon ground so low that the spring tides freely washed over it, and drenched his working details to their waists. Nevertheless, he pushed them forward, determined that the work he had undertaken should be fully done. As his parallels drew nearer and nearer to the work they were intending to reduce they came at last upon ground which had been mined, and planted with destructive torpedoes. Nevertheless, Gillmore pushed forward his working parties and multiplied the fire of his mor-

tars which dropped shells incessantly into the fort, letting them fall vertically so that no earthwork might afford protection against their destructiveness. Under the glare of powerful calcium lights the work went on by night as well as by day. During every minute of every hour in the twenty-four the contest was continued ceaselessly. The destructive fire upon the Confederate fort was added to by bringing a great ironclad warship the *New Ironsides* close in shore, and setting her guns at work.

After two days of this fearful conflict Gillmore was ready with his infantry columns to make that final rush upon the works by which he hoped to conquer them. But suddenly, in anticipation of a charge which they were too weakened to resist with any hope of success, the Confederates abandoned Fort Wagner, and withdrew also from Battery Gregg to the north of it.

This gave Gillmore complete control of Morris Island clear to Cummings's Point, and as he believed, made him master of Charleston harbor. In that belief he sent a fleet of whaleboats packed with infantrymen to take possession of Fort Sumter. But the Confederates there resisted with a vigor which destroyed most of the boats, disabling their crews, and resulted in the killing or capturing of the infantrymen who constituted their ship's companies.

It had been the hope of General Gillmore that when he should thus secure command of the entrance to Charleston harbor the fleet lying outside would press in and complete his work by capturing the city. But in this hope he was disappointed. Admiral

Dahlgren, who commanded the fleet, knew far better than Gillmore did the reserve resisting power of the Confederate batteries within the harbor, and he wisely declined to push his vessels into a bay which, if he had resolutely invaded it, would have become quickly a naval graveyard.

During all this time it had been Gillmore's ambition to bombard the city of Charleston itself. To that end in August he had brought up to Morris Island an eight-inch rifle gun of exceedingly long range and ordered it planted at a point selected by himself. The point was one so marshy that for a time no platform could be constructed that would support the gun. It is humorously related that the officer constructing it, having been told to make requisitions for whatever materials he might need, formally sent in a requisition for "a hundred men eighteen feet high." At last, however, by driving piles a platform was made and the gun, which the men named the Swamp Angel, was got into position. It threw thirty-six shells into the city of Charleston five miles away, and then burst. In order to reach so great a distance it had been elevated to about 23 degrees. No gun that was ever constructed other than a mortar, can long endure firing at so great an elevation.

After his capture of Fort Wagner and Battery Gregg Gillmore resumed his bombardment of the city from the latter point, which lies a mile or two nearer than did the position of the Swamp Angel.

Gillmore had succeeded in capturing what had been supposed to be the main defenses to the harbor and the city. He had utterly failed to capture the city

itself, or in any way to break the resistance which, to the end, continued to hold the harbor secure against Federal attack.

During all this time the Federals had been holding Port Royal and the islands along the coast between Charleston and Savannah. With strong forces they had made many advances inland, hoping to break the railroad line between the two cities and to push through the open country into the rear of one or the other.

All of these efforts had failed. Chief among them was the attempt upon Pocotaligo and Coosawhatchie, which was made with a force of five thousand men on the twenty-second of October, 1862. This attempt was defeated by a meager force of 350 men reinforced to 700, who stood all day against eight times their number in defense of a causeway 225 yards long, which ended in a bridge on the Confederate side. The bridge was torn up by the Confederates and hour after hour during the long day they stood to their guns and swept away every column that was formed to advance along the causeway and rebuild the crossing.

CHAPTER XLII

The Campaigns of Chickamauga and Chattanooga

While Lee was fighting his tremendous campaigns in Virginia, Maryland and Pennsylvania, and while Grant was battling for Vicksburg, two other armies confronted each other near the southern border line of Tennessee. Rosecrans had command of the Federal forces near Murfreesboro, and Braxton Bragg was in charge of the Confederates at Chattanooga. The position of each of these armies was a serious threat to the other side. If Bragg should be left unoccupied by his enemy it was easily within his power to make a dangerous dash towards Cincinnati or Louisville, while if he should withdraw from Rosecrans's front there was nothing to prevent that general from "marching through Georgia," to Mobile or Savannah or Charleston.

Grant, besieging Vicksburg, asked for reinforcements from Rosecrans by way of warding off that blow in the rear which he feared that Johnston might deliver and at the same time Johnston begged for reinforcements from Bragg in order that he might deliver such a blow. Each of the commanders at Murfreesboro and Chattanooga realized the necessity of remaining where he was so long at least as his adversary should remain. The result was that neither

sent the reinforcements for which his brother in the field was so clamorously calling.

These two armies for a long time stood watching each other, each waiting for the other to make some movement that would give it opportunity. In the meanwhile the cavalry on either side was engaged in making some of the most picturesque raids that were at any time made during the struggle. On both sides the cavalry had by this time learned its business, and realized its possibilities of independent action in the enemy's country. The Federal cavalier, Grierson, swept through Mississippi carrying desolation wherever he went. The Confederates, Wheeler and Forrest, rushed hurricanelike through the country north, battling here and there with such forces as they met. Gordon Granger and Colonel Streight on the Federal side were swinging swords almost continually.

The operations of this kind were too many, and strategically of too little importance to call for detailed description in a general history of the war. But two of them were so dramatic in their conduct and ending that they must be mentioned here. One of these was the attempt of Colonel Streight with about 2,000 men to march around Bragg's army, and cut off his communications. This raid was made early in April, and Forrest followed it with all the vigor that usually characterized that general's operations. The two forces were in constant battle as the one swept onward and the other followed. Streight meanwhile was working havoc with Confederate depots of supplies, with railroad property, and other

possessions of his enemy. Finally on the third of May, Forrest succeeded in placing himself in a position where he was justified in demanding the surrender of Streight's force. He made the demand boldly and threateningly and Streight surrendered only to learn after the capitulation was made that the men under his command really outnumbered those of Forrest. It was Forrest's boast afterward that in this case he had "won by a pure bluff."

The other raid which rises into historical importance was that of John Morgan north of the Ohio. Starting in July with a force of 3,000 Confederate cavalrymen and ten guns Morgan crossed the Ohio river into Indiana, capturing two steamers and using them as ferryboats. He then swept through Indiana towards Cincinnati, burning mills and bridges, tearing up railroads, and spreading terror in his pathway. But resolution accompanied the terror. Every man in all that region who could bear a gun turned out to fight the raiders and to destroy them before they should succeed in recrossing the river. This was accomplished at last with the aid of gunboats and steamboats. Morgan was compelled to surrender a small remnant of his force, and was sent for safe-keeping to the Ohio state prison, from which he later escaped by digging.

All these operations, of course, were subsidiary to the general purposes of the campaign.

Rosecrans was an exceedingly capable strategist and upon this occasion, more conspicuously than on any other during his career, his capacity in that way was demonstrated.

Bragg occupied Chattanooga, the strategic importance of which has been explained in an earlier chapter. The position was practically impregnable by any form of direct assault; for Rosecrans to have hurled his army against it would have been an act of well-nigh suicidal folly. In such an assault he must have lost ten men for every one of his enemy's men whom he could hope to put hors de combat. Yet it was necessary for Rosecrans to get Bragg out of Chattanooga. In order to do so he pushed a part of his army southward, threatening an invasion of Georgia. That state was defenseless except in so far as Bragg's army defended it. Rosecrans's movement, therefore, quickly compelled Bragg to withdraw from his strong and threatening position in order to head off what he supposed to be that southward movement that Sherman afterward made, and that is known in history as "the march to the sea." As soon as he quitted Chattanooga, Rosecrans occupied that place about the middle of September.

It was apparently good policy for Rosecrans instantly and aggressively to follow his foe, and he did so in spite of the fact that his three corps were dangerously separated at a time of heavy rains, when the roads were bad, streams out of their banks, marching difficult, and promptitude of movement impossible. In the meantime Bragg had been heavily reinforced by Longstreet's corps sent out by Lee to save this situation. Thus strengthened Bragg turned about with intent to assail his adversary, and perhaps to destroy him. On the nineteenth of September the two armies met on the banks of Chickamauga creek.

There for two days raged one of the great battles of the war.

Rosecrans brought into the action about 55,000 men and Bragg had perhaps 10,000 more. It was Bragg who made the attack. As the lines lay, the Confederate right and the Federal left extended toward Chattanooga.

Bragg's plan of battle was to fall upon the Federal left, crush it, bend back the line, and place himself between the Federal army and its base. There could have been no better plan of battle formed, but it was not executed in the best fashion possible. Had Bragg fully realized the superiority of Longstreet to his other corps commanders, and still more the superiority of Longstreet's men who had fought at Fredericksburg, Chancellorsville, Antietam and Gettysburg, he would have placed Longstreet upon his right, in order that the blow might be delivered with all that was possible of crushing force. Instead of that he assigned the force of General Leonidas Polk to that position. Polk was a West Point graduate, but soon after graduation he had become a clergyman of the Episcopal church, and for many years past had been a bishop in that church. A fact that had more importance perhaps, was that Polk's men had not been trained by the experience of Lee's tremendous onslaughts to the best work of the soldier, and unfortunately for Bragg, but fortunately for Rosecrans, that left wing of the Federal army upon which the main assault was made, was under command of General George H. Thomas, one of the most determined fighters on either side during the war.

Under Polk the assault was made loosely, and without that perfect concert of action which Longstreet, had he been in command, would have brought to bear. Thomas met it with obstinate resistance, and when opportunity offered, with counter attacks that greatly interfered with Bragg's plans. Nevertheless, the fighting was obstinate and destructive to both sides. In the end Polk succeeded in forcing Thomas's line backwards for a time, but before nightfall the Federal general had recovered the greater part of his ground, and when the first day's fighting ended the position of the two armies was practically the same that had existed in the morning.

About eleven o'clock on the next morning the battle was resumed with fury. Polk again assailed Thomas, and Thomas urgently asked for reinforcements with which to repel the assault. On that part of the line the struggle continued for hours with varying and not unequal success, the advantage lying on the whole with the Confederates. But later in the day Longstreet, who commanded the right center of Bragg's line, made a tremendous assault of that kind which had been rendered familiar to the fighters in Virginia by repeated experience. He swept everything before him. He made a gap in Rosecrans's line crushing its center, separating its wings from each other and driving it into confused retreat. Thomas alone held his force together, and fought the matter out to a finish. In spite of the fact clearly apparent to him that Rosecrans was defeated, and three fifths of his army destroyed, Thomas continued the bloody contest with a fury that knew no flinching, and hesitated

at nothing of human sacrifice in the achievement of its purposes. But for Thomas's obstinacy, skill and courage the Federal defeat at Chickamauga would have been a repetition of the disaster at Chancellorsville.

During the night Thomas succeeded in withdrawing his command, and the Federal army fell back to Chattanooga, taking refuge behind the fortifications there. Each army had lost in this struggle from 15,000 to 20,000 men. The exact figures are nowhere procurable.

Bragg had won a great victory, but he had not succeeded in regaining possession of Chattanooga. His enemy held that strong, strategic position. It was therefore his next task to besiege the foe there, and either by fighting or by maneuvering to drive him out of the place.

Two mountain heights, the one known as Lookout mountain and the other as Missionary Ridge, overlook the town, and command many of its approaches. When the battle was over Bragg promptly advanced and seized upon these heights. By doing so he succeeded in placing Chattanooga in a state of siege, stopping the navigation of the river, and cutting off all of Rosecrans's communications, with the exception of one highly inadequate mud road.

It is a maxim of military science that the army which can besiege a position can always capture it in the end unless the beleaguered place is relieved from the outside. Chattanooga was relieved from the outside in an exceedingly quiet, but exceedingly effective way. Ulysses S. Grant—at last a major general in

the regular army and in full command of the western department—went thither to supersede Rosecrans in command. The coming of this one silent and unostentatious man meant more to the Federal forces in that quarter than the arrival of half a dozen army corps would have signified. Grant got to Chattanooga on the twenty-third of October, 1863, and set to work at once with his practical common sense to meet and solve the problems of the situation.

He found the army half starved for lack of routes of communication with its bases of supply. He instantly set his men at work to open a new road which the facetious soldiers named the "cracker line," and which connected Chattanooga with a point on the river to which steamboats could come with abundant supplies. This relieved the Federal army in Chattanooga of its condition as an army in a state of siege. It made of it instead an army in the field, well fed, properly supplied, and ready for march or battle, as its commander might direct.

Having thus relieved the distresses of the army he had been sent to command, Grant's next thought was to employ that army in some profitable way. The Confederates, strongly fortified, held Lookout mountain and Missionary Ridge, and stretched their line for twelve miles across the Chattanooga valley. Grant decided to dislodge them. He could not do so with the forces assembled at Chattanooga, but at last the authorities at Washington had recognized him as a man worthy to command, and had placed the entire department under his control, and all its armies were at his disposal. Grant believed in Sher-

man, and mightily trusted him. At every point in his career where Sherman could be called to his aid Grant summoned that commander, and employed his genius as the most effective instrument for the accomplishment of his own purposes. It is not too much to say that Sherman was to Grant quite all that Stonewall Jackson was to Lee—a lieutenant to whom he might assign the most difficult enterprises with full assurance that they would be executed with all the skill, determination, valor and sagacity that it was possible to bring to bear upon them as military operations.

So when Grant determined to dislodge the Confederates from Lookout mountain and Missionary Ridge his first step was to summon Sherman to join him with the corps then under Sherman's command.

Certain military necessities delayed Sherman's march, and he did not reach the position at Chattanooga until the fifteenth of November. His arrival swelled Grant's force to about 80,000 men, while Bragg's army was weakened by the detachment of Longstreet with 20,000 men to operate against Burnside, who was commanding at Knoxville, Tennessee. The Confederate force in possession of Lookout mountain and Missionary Ridge was thus considerably inferior to the army with which Grant prepared to assail it. But the Confederates were strongly posted and on a part of their line, at least, they were well entrenched.

Grant's plan of battle was simple, as his plans of battle usually were. He ordered Sherman to carry Missionary Ridge, which constituted the extreme

right of the Confederate position, while Thomas and Hooker should so far engage the remainder of the line as to prevent the reinforcement of that point upon which his chief assault was to be made. If he could accomplish this Bragg must either retreat, abandoning his threat against Chattanooga, or he must seek some point at which to give battle again with a force so far weakened by detachment as to render battle a dangerous alternative for him.

Sherman advanced on the twenty-fourth of November. His assault was repulsed and for the time unsuccessful. Hooker, in the meanwhile, exceeded his orders, and did a good deal more fighting than Grant had intended him to do. It was his assigned duty merely to engage that part of the Confederate lines which lay in front of him, sufficiently to prevent the sending of any force from it to reinforce the Confederate right. But Hooker was by instinct a fighter at all times. And on this occasion he pushed his men boldly into a fight that his commanding officer had not intended. His force climbed to the extreme summit of the mountain, passing a zone of mist and fog as they went. Having reached the summit they routed the Confederates there and made themselves masters of the heights. The fact that they passed through this fog zone on their way up led to the poetic nicknaming of this action as the "Battle above the Clouds." It was not, properly speaking, a battle at all, and it was not above the clouds in the sense in which that phrase impresses the ordinary mind.

On the twenty-fifth Grant pushed Thomas again into the fight, and assailed the position on Missionary

Ridge. A very gallant and very vigorous action followed. It resulted in the Federals carrying the Ridge, sweeping everything before them, and driving Bragg's army into full retreat. He retired with what remained of his force to Dalton, Georgia, and almost immediately afterward Gen. Joseph E. Johnston was ordered to take command in that quarter in his stead.

The campaign had been dramatic in many of its features, and peculiarly picturesque in some of them. It had cost the lives of from six to ten thousand men on either side. It left the Federals masters of Chattanooga, placing the Confederates in an uncertain defensive position against which future operations were comparatively easy.

CHAPTER XLIII

Grant's Strategy—The Red River Campaign—Fort Pillow, Etc.

The operations of the Confederate war covered a vast area, and included a multitude of actions severe in themselves, and often rising to the dignity of great battles so far, at least, as the extent of the slaughter was concerned. But many of these actions had no particular bearing or effect upon the general conduct and outcome of the war. To tell the story of them all would not only be tedious, but it would make this history a confused mass of only slightly related details rather than a consecutive narrative of what happened. It is necessary, therefore, to summarize many things which in themselves were dramatic in their character and of the highest importance to the men engaged in them.

The detachment of Longstreet to operate against Burnside at Knoxville has already been mentioned in the previous chapter. There was some brilliant fighting there, in which the Federals succeeded in beating off Longstreet's tremendous assault, but only after suffering one conspicuous defeat at the hands of the great Confederate lieutenant. In like manner the expedition of Banks in command of 40,000 Federals into the Red River country, west of the Mississippi, had no important bearing upon the war except in so

far as it resulted in depriving Grant for a time of the services of 40,000 veterans whose soldierly vigor he could have used to much better purpose.

This Red River expedition was inspired by cotton speculators for their own purposes of greed. It was intended to enable them to get possession of the great stores of cotton that lay in Louisiana and Texas. The expedition consisted of the army under Banks—a political general of far better military capacity than most political generals had—and a fleet of gunboats under that noted fighter, Commodore David D. Porter. Banks's army was opposed by a much smaller force of Confederates under General Richard Taylor, who nevertheless defeated it in an irregular action and drove it into a confused retreat which must have ended in surrender but for the protection of Porter's gunboats. Banks retreated painfully along the margin of the tortuous stream, nowhere daring to quit the gunboats' support even in order to save weary miles of marching around the bends in the river.

This expedition was ordered before Grant took command of all the armies. It was one of the many foolish blunders with the results of which the great Federal commander had to reckon and wrestle when he came into his own. As the spring of 1864 approached something happened which was of more importance to the Federal cause than any battle could be, or the success of any campaign. Congress and the administration recognized Grant as the great leader that he was, and gave him that authority of command which alone he needed in order to make an

end of the struggle. On the twenty-sixth of February a bill passed by Congress revived the grade of lieutenant general in the army. Grant was promptly nominated for that office, and confirmed in it by the Senate on the second day of March. On the third he was ordered to Washington, and on the ninth Mr. Lincoln delivered to him his commission as lieutenant general, with authority to direct the operations of all the Federal armies in whatever part of the country they might be stationed.

Oddly enough in thus bringing to the front and giving command to the only general who had shown adequate capacity to direct the war to a successful conclusion, the administration still retained as its adjutant general that conspicuously incapable person, General Halleck, who had done more than all other men and all other influences combined to interfere with Grant's work in the war, to prevent him from accomplishing the ends he sought in behalf of his country, and to fritter away the fruits of his victories after he had won them. The shade of Winfield Scott still held in mortmain its strange influence over the Washington authorities. And General Grant's personal memoirs—though they make no complaint of this absurdity—very clearly show, that in the gigantic combinations which he was now called upon to make, he was often seriously embarrassed by this continuance of an authority to interfere in many ways with his plans.

The advent of Grant to the command of all the armies in the field wrought a revolution instantly and conspicuously in the conduct of the war. He had no

sympathy whatever with the "pepper box policy." From the very beginning he had clearly seen that the strength of the Southern Confederacy lay in the fighting capacity of its armies. He had clearly seen that the problems of this war were not mainly geographical—that the occupation of this, that or the other position was of small consequence, except in so far as it tended to weaken the tremendous fighting force of that "best infantry on earth" which was defending Richmond on the one hand, and threatening Washington on the other.

Now that he had come into supreme command it was his first thought so to organize and coördinate all the operations of all the armies as to make them tend to the accomplishment of one supreme purpose—namely, the breaking and crushing of the Confederate power of resistance. As that power of resistance was centered chiefly in the Army of Northern Virginia, and in the genius of Robert E. Lee, Grant's grand combinations were all directed toward the destruction of that army, and the baffling of that genius.

As has been said already Grant was preëminently a man of practical common sense, and to his mind military problems were like any others that present themselves to the human mind—that is to say, they were problems, to be solved by the use of the means at command in the most effective way that could be thought of. War was to him like any other business. He knew that the administration had at its command, in men, money and materials, resources immeasurably superior to those which the South could control. It was his purpose to avail himself of that superiority in

every way possible. In all that involved considerations of humanity or courtesy he had the delicate sentiments of a tender-hearted and generous man. But in the conduct of war he did not permit sentiment for one moment to interfere with common sense.

The strategy with which he undertook to fight the war out to a finish was simple. His "objective" was always the army opposed to him, and not merely a geographical position. In all his orders to all his lieutenants he emphasized this incessantly. In order to end the war he must crush the Confederate armies, and to that effect he instructed Sherman and every other commander under his orders.

Grant established his headquarters in Virginia in order that he might give personal direction to the operations of the Army of the Potomac. He did this with a most delicate consideration for Meade, who had direct command of the Army of the Potomac, and whose devotion and capacity he trusted implicitly, as he has himself testified in his memoirs.

It was his simple plan of campaign first to prevent Lee's reinforcement from any quarter, and secondly to hurl all the force he could concentrate against the Army of Northern Virginia for the purpose of destroying the resisting power of that army. In his judgment it was more important to cripple Lee than to capture Richmond. And in his judgment, also, to cripple Lee was to make the capture of Richmond easy and certain.

In order that Lee might not be reinforced, Grant began by issuing orders for vigorous operations in every other part of the Confederacy. He ordered

Banks to withdraw from his wasteful cotton-seeking expedition up the Red river, to return to New Orleans, and to move thence against Mobile. He ordered Sherman to press back the Confederates in northern Georgia toward Atlanta, directing him to seize that town, and push on to the Gulf, thus again cutting in twain what remained of the Confederacy.

The military situation at this time could not be more clearly set forth than it was by General Grant himself, in his memoirs written long afterwards. In aid of a clear understanding his exact words are quoted here:

"The Mississippi river was guarded from St. Louis to its mouth; the line of the Arkansas was held, thus giving us all of the northwest north of that river. A few points in Louisiana, not remote from the river, were held by the Federal troops, as was also the mouth of the Rio Grande. East of the Mississippi we held substantially all north of the Memphis and Charleston railroad, as far east as Chattanooga, thence along the line of the Tennessee and Holston rivers, taking in nearly all of the State of Tennessee. West Virginia was in our hands; and that part of old Virginia, north of the Rapidan and east of the Blue Ridge we also held. On the sea coast we had Fortress Monroe and Norfolk in Virginia, Plymouth, Washington and New Berne in North Carolina, Beaufort and Folly and Morris Islands, Hilton Head, Port Royal and Fort Pulaski in South Carolina and Georgia, Fernandina, St. Augustine, Key West and Pensacola in Florida. The balance of the southern territory, an empire in extent, was still in the hands of the enemy. Sherman, who had succeeded me in the command of the military division of the Mississippi, commanded all the troops in the territory west of the Alleghanies and north of Natchez, with a large movable force about Chattanooga.

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In the east the opposing forces stood in substantially the same relations towards each other as three years before or when the war began. They were both between the Federal and Confederate capitals. It is true footholds had been secured by us in Virginia and North Carolina, but beyond that no substantial advantage had been gained on either side.

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That portion of the Army of the Potomac not engaged in guarding lines of communication was on the northern bank of the Rapidan. The Army of Northern Virginia, confronting it on the opposite bank of the same river was strongly entrenched, and commanded by the acknowledged ablest general in the Confederate army.

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The Union armies were now divided into nineteen departments, though four of them in the west had been concentrated into a single military division. The Army of the Potomac was a separate command, and had no territorial limits. There were thus seventeen distinct commanders. Before this time these various armies had acted separately and independently of each other, giving the enemy an opportunity often of depleting one command, not pressed to reinforce another more actively engaged. I determined to stop this. To this end I regarded the Army of the Potomac as the center, and all west to Memphis, along the line described as our position at the time, and the north of it, the right wing; the Army of the James, under General Butler (with headquarters at Fortress Monroe), as the left wing, and all the troops south as a force in rear of the enemy. Some of these latter were occupying positions from which they could not render service proportionate to their numerical strength. All such were depleted to the minimum necessary to hold their positions as a guard against blockade runners; where they could not do this their positions were abandoned altogether. In this way 10,000 men were added to the Army of the James from South Carolina alone, with General Gillmore in com-

mand. Officers and soldiers on furlough, of whom there were many thousands, were ordered to their proper commands; concentration was the order of the day.

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As a reinforcement to the Army of the Potomac, or to act in support of it, the Ninth army corps, over 20,000 strong, under General Burnside, had been rendezvoused at Annapolis, Maryland. This was an admirable position for such a reinforcement. The corps could be brought at the last moment as a reinforcement to the Army of the Potomac, or it could be thrown on the sea coast south of Norfolk, in Virginia or North Carolina, to operate against Richmond from that direction.

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My general plan now was to concentrate all the force possible against the Confederate armies in the field. There were but two such, as we have seen, east of the Mississippi river, and facing north. The Army of Northern Virginia, General Robert E. Lee commanding, was on the south bank of the Rapidan, confronting the Army of the Potomac. The second, under Joseph E. Johnston, was at Dalton, Ga., opposed to Sherman, who was still at Chattanooga. Beside these main armies the Confederates had to guard the Shenandoah valley, a great storehouse to feed their armies from, and their line of communications from Richmond to Tennessee. Forrest, a brave and intrepid cavalry general, was in the West with a large force, making a larger command necessary to hold what we had gained in middle and west Tennessee. We could not abandon any territory north of the line held by the enemy, because it would lay the Northern states open to invasion. But as the Army of the Potomac was the principal garrison for the protection of Washington, even while it was moving on Lee, so all the forces to the west and the Army of the James guarded their special trusts when advancing from them, as well as when remaining at them.

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Accordingly I arranged for a simultaneous movement all

along the line. Sherman was to move from Chattanooga, Johnston and Atlanta being his objective points. Crooke, commanding in West Virginia, was to move from the mouth of the Gauley river, with a cavalry force and some artillery, the Virginia and Tennessee railroad to be his objective. Sigel was in command in the Valley of Virginia. He was to advance up the Valley, covering the North from an invasion through that channel, as well by advancing as by remaining near Harper's Ferry. Every mile he advanced also, gave us possession of stores on which Lee relied. Butler was to advance by the James River, having Richmond and Petersburg as his objective.

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Banks, in the department of the Gulf, was ordered to assemble all the troops he had at New Orleans in time to join in the general move, Mobile to be his objective.

Now for the first time in the entire history of the war a single masterful mind was in control of all the operations of all the vast armies of the United States, and was trying to direct all those operations with singleness of purpose to a foreordained end. The coming of Grant into command thus marks an epoch in the history of the war.

Some of his lieutenants did their work incompetently, thus in a degree baffling his purpose, but in the main those whom he had wisely selected for command did that which he required of them in masterly fashion. Sigel, who was to advance up the Valley of Virginia, and break the communications between Tennessee and the Confederate capital, failed utterly. In profound disgust, General Grant received from Halleck a dispatch saying, "Sigel is in full retreat on Strasbourg. He will do nothing but run; never did anything else."

Banks also failed to place his army of 40,000 men at New Orleans in time to help in the grand strategy which Grant had inaugurated.

Butler got himself "bottled up," as General Grant phrased it, on the south side of the James river, so that while he held a strong defensive position there, he was unable to employ his troops aggressively with effect. But the rest of Grant's subordinates—and especially Sherman—carried out their orders with brilliant capacity and tremendous effect.

While Grant was thus preparing for his grand campaign, the Confederates were not idle. With forces greatly inferior in number and equipment, and with an exhausted country behind him, Lee stood upon the defensive, waiting to see what his adversary might undertake, and what opportunities might open themselves to him for offensive defense.

In the meanwhile that most active and tireless of campaigners, General N. B. Forrest, went upon a raid in West Tennessee and Kentucky which, for a time, seriously threatened an invasion of the North and a disturbance of General Grant's plans. Sweeping northward like a hurricane, Forrest captured the Federal garrison of 500 men at Union City in Tennessee, wrecked railroads in every direction, and pushed his column daringly to Paducah, Kentucky, on the banks of the Ohio, fifty miles above Cairo. Sherman sent all his cavalry and other available troops to check this movement, and if possible to make an end of Forrest by capturing him and his force. But Forrest was too quick for him. Rapidly falling back, he assailed the Federal fort on the

Mississippi river, known as Fort Pillow. That fortress was held by negro troops, and the Southerners had never yet consented to regard the employment of such troops as legitimate in this war.

Here it is necessary to explain. The enlistment of negroes in military service was no new thing in American war. During the Revolution, and even before it, the statutes of South Carolina and of some of the other colonies specifically provided for such enlistments, and in South Carolina, at least, the law made it an offense for the master of any slave to refuse his service to the country as a soldier. Again during the war of 1812-1815, Andrew Jackson made free use of vigorous young negroes, enlisting them as soldiers wherever he could find them, and appealing to their patriotism to support with manly determination the independence of the only country they could call their own.

But in the Confederate war a different condition of affairs existed. From the beginning of the struggle the Confederates employed negroes to work upon fortifications, and although they did not enlist them as soldiers, this employment of them amounted to much the same thing in so far as it released an equal number of enlisted men for active work in the field. So general was the prejudice against any and every recognition of negro equality at the North as well as at the South, that many newspaper writers at the North—ignorant of the history of their own country with respect to the military employment of negroes—bitterly denounced all this, insisting that the Confederates were employing savages in arms

against a civilized enemy. That plea was apt to be an effective one in this country, for the reason that from the beginning of the colonial struggles until the end of the war of 1812-1815 it had been one of America's grievances against Great Britain that agents of the mother country had mercilessly employed Red Indian savages in murderous warfare upon the white men.

When, later in the war, it was decided at the North to arm and use as soldiers such able-bodied negroes as might be induced to volunteer, the recruits were naturally drawn in the main from the large companies of runaway slaves who had escaped into the Federal lines. This fact gave to the military employment of negroes against the South the aspect of an attempt to create a servile insurrection and war—the one thing which had been always most dreaded in those states in which the negroes outnumbered the whites. Servile insurrection was understood to mean rapine, the burning of homes, the butchery of women and little children, and all else of horror that savage warfare may signify. The Southerners therefore held the enlistment of negroes in the Northern armies to be an act of unforgivable vandalism and savagery. They peremptorily refused to recognize the negro anywhere as a soldier, or in case of his capture to treat him as a prisoner of war.

In execution of that purpose of absolute and unflinching historical truthfulness which the author of this work has tried to make his only inspiration, it must be said that in many cases, and particularly on occasions of raids into undefended country, certain

of the negro troops did many things to justify the Southern view of the iniquity of their employment against white men. In regions undefended they frequently committed outrages of a kind which the instincts of humanity never forgive.

It is proper here to emphasize again the fact to which the present historian directed earnest attention in a work published in 1874—namely, that throughout the war, when all the Southern white men were in the field, and when all the plantations with the women and children inhabiting their homes were unprotected, the negro slaves who remained upon the plantations were affectionately loyal and obedient, nowhere instituting insurrection or in any other wise betraying the trust reposed in their fidelity and affection, and this in spite of the fact that they perfectly knew that the failure of the South in the War must result in their own emancipation. Emphasis is here given to this fact in order that nothing recorded concerning the atrocities committed by certain negro troops shall impair or reflect upon the negro character generally.

But from beginning to end the Confederates refused to recognize the right of their enemy to enlist their runaway slaves in the war against them. From first to last they refused to regard negroes as soldiers, entitled to be treated as such. So returning to our theme, it must be said that when Forrest found Fort Pillow garrisoned chiefly by negro troops, even had he desired it to be otherwise, he could not have prevented the slaughter that ensued. His men simply would not make prisoners of war out of negroes in

arms, and the result of the struggle was a Federal loss of about 500 killed together with nearly all their officers, while the Confederates according to Forrest's report lost only about twenty men. In his dispatches, written at that time of excitement, Forrest said, "It is hoped that these facts will demonstrate to the Northern people that negro soldiers cannot cope with Southerners." His words have since been construed to mean a blood-thirsty antagonism to the negroes. That construction may be correct, but General Forrest himself contended to the end of his life that he meant only to point out the ease with which Southern soldiers conquered and destroyed this negro force as illustrating the inefficiency of black men in fighting white men. That meaning would seem to be the only one which it is necessary to give to the language of his dispatch.

Other minor operations during the period of preparation for the tremendous struggle of 1864 were carried on in different parts of the South with results that had no important bearing upon the general course of the contest or upon its outcome. These operations need not be more particularly mentioned here.

CHAPTER XLIV

Grant's Plan of Campaign

As the month of April neared its end Grant prepared to execute the plans he had so laboriously formed, and for which he had given to all his lieutenants in every quarter of the country orders as minute as they could be made without risk of leaving any lieutenant embarrassed for want of liberty of action in the event of an emergency.

For the sake of a clear understanding let us state again in brief outline his scheme of operation. His fundamental conception was that in order to conquer the Confederacy he must destroy its armies in the field, and especially Lee's army, which had been from the first the chief source and center of danger to the Federal cause, both by reason of its superb fighting quality, and by reason of the masterful genius of Lee that directed it. Grant's first care, therefore, was so to employ all the subsidiary forces in all quarters of the South as to prevent the sending of any reinforcements to Lee.

His second fundamental idea was to fight the Confederate armies in the open field rather than assail them in defensive works at the points of chief strategic importance.

Certain writers for the press have severely criticized the great Federal commander for having wasted

thousands of lives in his march overland upon Richmond instead of transferring his army to the front of that city by water as he might easily have done without the loss of a man. This criticism is ignorant in the extreme, but as its conclusions persist in spite of Grant's own, and many other intelligent replies, it seems necessary to say again that his purpose was not to reach the front of Richmond, but to encounter, and if possible, to crush Lee's army in the field. It is perfectly true that he might have placed the Army of the Potomac in front of Richmond and Petersburg without any battling or any loss of life, just as McClellan had done in 1862. But in that case his task would have been to assail the greatest general of the Confederate army, the greatest engineer of modern times, and the strongest fighting force of the South in positions of their own choosing, defended by the most formidable defensive works that ingenuity could construct. It was Grant's idea, and a perfectly sound one, that he could not afford this—that this was the longest and most difficult instead of the shortest and easiest road to the accomplishment of his military purposes. He had two men to Lee's one; he could get two more for the asking where Lee could not get another one. He wisely decided, therefore, that if possible he would compel Lee to fight in the open field, instead of confronting him in defensive works. It was not certain that he could compel Lee to this course. But it was his purpose to do so if possible, and in the end he succeeded in achieving that possibility.

Rightly interpreted, there was no greater strategy

in all the war than this. Yet nothing has been more misunderstood or more injuriously reported. In his uncertainty as to whether Lee would accept battle in the open field, or would fall back upon Richmond and defend that city behind strong earthworks, Grant prepared himself for either contingency. He ordered Butler, with a strongly reinforced army, to move up the southern side of James river, supported by the gunboats, and to establish himself in an unassailable position, from which, in case of Lee's declining battle in the open, he might threaten or assail the southern and eastern defenses of the Confederate capital, while Grant, with the Army of the Potomac, might fall upon that city from the North, thus bringing to bear against Lee a combined force three or four times as great as his own.

But his strong hope was that Lee would accept battle in the field, and that the Confederate general might be so far crippled there by the assaults of overwhelming numbers as to be far less formidable in his final defense of Richmond than he must be if forced back to that position by maneuvering and without fighting.

If there was any error or miscalculation in General Grant's plan for the destruction of the Confederacy and the ending of the war, that error was in underestimating the tremendous fighting force of the Army of Northern Virginia, under command of Robert E. Lee. Grant had never met Lee in battle, and had learned of his capacity and of the resisting power of the army under his command only by hearsay. These were so much greater than anything else of the kind

that had been known in the war that Grant's mistake, if he made any mistake, was surely pardonable. He had reckoned rightly in supposing that Sherman could deal successfully with Johnston, could take Atlanta, and could push his army thence to the sea, again cutting in twain what remained of the Confederacy. Perhaps he had not fully appreciated the resisting capacity of Lee with his Army of Northern Virginia. Perhaps he had a trifle too confidently reckoned upon numbers as a means of crushing that force. At any rate in his tremendous campaign from the Wilderness to Petersburg, he did not conquer it or crush it. So far indeed did he fail to do this, that after Lee had retired to Richmond and Petersburg and there confronted Grant's enormously reinforced army, the Confederate general was able to reinforce Early in the valley and send him on an expedition northward which threw Washington again into a panic, and for a time threatened the compulsory withdrawal of a part of Grant's forces from the siege of Richmond and Petersburg.

In all his plans Grant calculated, as he had an entire right to do, upon an enormous superiority of force, whether measured by the number of men under his command, or by the extent of equipment, or by the perfection of his supply departments or by the limitless reinforcement which he was privileged to call to his aid, where his adversary was forbidden by strenuous circumstance, to add a single brigade or regiment or company or man to his fighting force.

It was his plan to hurl against Lee a force so overwhelming that in the ordinary calculations of war it

should crush him completely. To that end he ordered Meade on the twenty-seventh of April to advance with his entire army from the position he occupied near Bull Run to the Rappahannock. On the same day he ordered Burnside, who lay at Annapolis with 20,000 men, to advance and occupy Meade's former position, thus bringing to bear the whole of the forces in northern Virginia as a column of offense against Lee.

At the same time Grant ordered Butler to push up on the south side of the James river, and secure a strong and threatening position in rear of the Richmond defenses. Reinforcements were held ready to go to Butler's aid in the event that Lee should fall back upon the defenses of the Confederate capital.

On the same day Sherman was directed from Grant's headquarters to mass his forces and begin that splendid advance against Johnston and Atlanta, which was intended first to neutralize and then to destroy the only great Confederate army other than Lee's which remained in the field. Other and minor operations were ordered from the Valley of Virginia, from West Virginia, from eastern Tennessee, from New Orleans and from other points, all of which were intended to accomplish two purposes—one of them the interruption of Confederate communications, and the other to prevent the sending of any reinforcements to Lee.

General Grant has himself frankly stated in his "Memoirs," page 419, that "to get possession of Lee's army was the first great object. With the capture of his army Richmond would necessarily follow." Here

we have the purpose of the campaign in a nutshell. If General Grant could have succeeded in capturing Lee's army or destroying it in the field, there is no possible doubt whatever that Richmond would have followed, as he said, and the Confederate resistance would have ended early in the summer of 1864. For Sherman's operations against Johnston, Atlanta and the far South were completely successful, as we shall see hereafter. The resisting capacity of the Confederacy was prolonged solely through the fact that Grant's hope of quickly capturing or destroying Lee's army was baffled for the time, and postponed to another year.

General Grant has himself explained the immediate strategy employed by him in his campaign in northern Virginia. He had his choice between two courses,—either to move continuously by his own left flank around Lee's right, thus keeping always at his back that great system of waterways beginning in the Rappahannock and Potomac, and stretching on to Fortress Monroe and the James, and maintaining at all times in his rear a perfect and unassailable base of communications and supplies; or, on the other hand, to move by his own right flank around Lee's left, as Hooker had tried to do, thus threatening the Confederate communications, and forcing Lee, as it were, into a pocket. Should he adopt this second course, however, he must carry with him all that he needed of ammunition and food supplies, and expose his own communications to possible rupture at any hour by daring operations on the part of the Confederate forces. He determined, therefore, to move by

his own left, assailing Lee's right and keeping the waterways always at his back.

The plan was simple and effective. It is true that it left some advantages to Lee—unmolested communications and short lines of march—but these were more than offset by the other considerations involved. From beginning to end of the struggle Grant found no occasion to change his method in the least.

CHAPTER XLV

The Battles in the Wilderness

With the coming of May, 1864, the two great commanding geniuses of the War—Lee and Grant—met each other in conflict. The exact forces commanded by each have never been ascertained. But the estimates of the various writers on the subject, North and South, do not differ sufficiently, to make their differences of much consequence. In round numbers Lee had, on the Rapidan, about 66,000 men. The army with which Grant opposed him numbered approximately 120,000. These estimates do not include either the Confederate forces defending Richmond and Petersburg on the one hand, or Butler's strong army south of the James on the other. Lee had called Longstreet back from the region of Atlanta, and had thus in effect massed all the force that he could hope to employ in that campaign. With this force substantially half as large as that of his adversary, he determined to accept Grant's offer of battle in the field. To that end he moved his army on the second of May to the western edge of that peculiar region known as the Wilderness. There he awaited the coming of Grant.

This Wilderness, it should be explained, is a region of peculiar difficulty by reason of the tangled mass of second growths which have replaced the original

forest, cut away a century or more ago as fuel for iron works. In extent the region is about a dozen miles wide in either direction. It borders the Rapidan, and extends to the open country in front of Chancellorsville, where the battle of that name had been fought a year before.

At midnight on the third of May the Army of the Potomac crossed the Rapidan on five pontoon bridges, and marched at once into the Wilderness, where it remained during the whole of the fourth in order that its enormous train of 4,000 wagons and the reserve artillery of more than 100 guns might be protected in their passage across the river. It was Grant's hope to move by his left flank, out of the Wilderness, passing around his enemy, and placing himself with all his force between that enemy and the Confederate capital. But with that promptitude which was characteristic of all his operations, Lee anticipated this movement and struck at Grant's flank early on the morning of the fifth.

The assault was made in the midst of the Wilderness—in a thicket so dense that it was impossible at many points for the men on one side to see those on the other, a hundred feet away. Every forward or backward movement involved a struggle through a tangle of vines and underbrush and young forest growths so thickly standing as to render all progress difficult, and all regularity of formation impossible. On either side no corps or regiment or company could know what its own friends were doing on its right or its left; no officer could tell whether he was being supported on his flank or had been abandoned there;

no steadiness or cohesion was possible. No alignment could be maintained. It is doubtful to-day that any officer on either side in that struggle, from Grant and Lee at the top to the smallest commander at the other end of the line, ever had a clear-cut idea of the course that that day's fighting took. It consisted of a series of irregular assaults made with desperate valor, and repelled with equal determination. It resembled nothing so much as a battle in the dark, the one thing which all commanders most dread, and most sedulously avoid.

Very naturally the fighting was at short range at every point. Scarcely anywhere on that tangled field did the opposing forces discover each other's positions until they came within short pistol-shot range. The slaughter was therefore tremendous and at no time could either commanding general fully satisfy himself as to how the battle was going or what its result was likely to be or even what his own or the enemy's position was.

The two greatest fighting machines that America has yet produced had met in battle, in the midst of such a maze of tangled growths as nowhere else exists except in marshes where such a meeting is impossible by reason of a lack of firm ground for the men to stand upon. Here at least, there was firm ground.

Grant had not expected to encounter his enemy here. He had supposed that Lee would move out of the Wilderness and choose more favorable ground upon which to receive the assaults of his enemy. Accordingly, the Federal commander had already pushed a part of his army under Hancock toward

the edge of the Wilderness, hoping by a rapid march to place it between the Confederate army and the Confederate capital. No sooner, however, was Lee's assault developed than Grant saw clearly that he must fight a determined battle here on this most unsuitable ground. Lee had decided this in the obvious expectation of finding Grant unready. But readiness under all circumstances was a part and an important part of Grant's character and intellectual make-up. It was his habit of mind to take things as he found them and to do the best he could in every case. He hurriedly called Hancock back and accepted battle in the jungle.

The fighting was desperate throughout the day, and at the day's end no decisive advantage rested with either party. Lee had been fighting with only a part of his army, for the reason that Longstreet with that first corps upon which Lee always relied for the more desperate work of war did not reach position in time to take part in the struggle of that day.

At nightfall it was obvious that the contest must be resumed in the morning and indeed, each of the great commanders intended that it should be, each planning to strike first if possible. In preparation for the coming morning's work both sides spent the night in diligent fortifying with such means as were at hand.

Grant ordered an assault all along the line to be made at five o'clock in the morning. Lee, still more alert, struck out with his left an hour earlier. He was still weak on his right wing, for lack of Longstreet, who had not yet come up. Grant, recognizing

this fact, planned to hurl Hancock upon the Confederate right at the appointed hour of five o'clock in the morning. By an adroit handling of Rosser's cavalry, the Confederates managed to deceive Hancock into the belief that Longstreet was making a flank movement against the Federal left, similar to those which Jackson had made with such destructive effect in former battles. To meet this and to avoid a disaster like that which had befallen Hooker at Chancellorsville, Hancock promptly detached a considerable part of his force, and sent it to his left, thus weakening his column of attack.

Nevertheless he struck hard enough to drive back the weak Confederate right for more than a mile. Then Longstreet, who had undertaken no such flanking expedition as that which Hancock had supposed, came up and threw his veterans precipitately upon his foe.

These two—Longstreet and Hancock—were both old fighters and very stubborn ones, and they had under their command the very best men there were in their respective armies. When they met in direct conflict at close quarters, therefore, the fighting was as obstinate as any that had yet occurred on any field since the beginning of the war.

Hancock was driven back and the losses on both sides were great, including a conspicuously large loss of officers from the lowest to the highest grade. General Wadsworth on the Federal side, and General Jenkins on the Confederate, were killed, and Longstreet himself was shot through the neck and shoulder so that he had to be carried from the field.

Having thus lost his great lieutenant, General Lee went to that quarter of the field and took personal command in Longstreet's place. It was then that one of the most picturesque incidents of the war occurred. Impressed with the desperate necessity of carrying a certain peculiarly difficult position, General Lee seized the colors of a Texas regiment and undertook to lead the perilous assault in person. The troops loudly protested against such an exposure of their beloved general to danger, and the Texas colonel, in behalf of his men and amid their applause, solemnly promised that they would carry the point at all costs and all hazards if Lee would go to the rear. Finally, Lee's bridle rein was seized, and he was forcibly taken to the rear, while the Texans advanced to the charge with the battle cry of "Lee to the rear!" upon their lips. The incident has been exquisitely celebrated in song by the poet John R. Thompson.

Under inspiration of this incident, the Confederates made an assault of desperate determination, and at one point broke through the Federal lines. They captured the position for the recovery of which Lee had sought to sacrifice himself, but the result was achieved at tremendous cost of life, and their further efforts to dislodge Hancock were bloodily repelled.

By some means—probably by reason of the fierce firing on either side—a forest fire now broke out in Hancock's front, and the flames quickly communicated themselves to the log revetments of his fortifications. The heat and the smoke forced the Federals to retreat, fighting as they went against the Confederates who pursued them with fury. Sadly,

enough, besides the dead there were large numbers of wounded men, both Federal and Confederate, lying among the burning bushes and underbrush of that mile-wide stretch of wilderness over which the flames swept. Here misfortune and sheer accident wantonly added to the necessary horrors of war another horror not contemplated or intended by either commander although that, like all other risks of battle, is included in the contract which the soldier makes with his country. These men, wounded and helpless as they lay amid the flames that circled and enwrapped them, must have realized as nobody unaccustomed to the horrors of war can, the truth of Sherman's statement that "war is all hell."

Night ended the struggle, and the men on both sides retired to their entrenchments to await the events of the morrow. On neither side was there the least suggestion of demoralization or of shrinking from the work that was yet to be done. On neither side were there skulkers in the rear as there had been at Manassas, at Shiloh and at nearly every other great battle of an earlier time. The volunteers who composed the armies of the Potomac and Northern Virginia were real soldiers now, inured to war, and desperate in their determination to do its work with out faltering or failure. This fact—this change in the temper and morale of the men on either side—had greatly simplified the tasks set for Grant and Lee to solve. They knew their men. They knew that those men would stand against anything, endure slaughter without flinching, hardship without complaining, and make desperate endeavor without shrinking. The two

armies had become what they had not been earlier in the contest, perfect instruments of war, that could be relied upon as confidently as the machinist relies upon his engine scheduled to make so many revolutions per minute at a given rate of horse power, and with the precision of science itself.

It will be remembered that as Jefferson Davis approached the battlefield of Manassas, where the Confederates had won a conspicuous victory, the multitude of panic-stricken fugitives through whom he passed was such as to convince him that Beauregard had been disastrously defeated. It will be remembered that at Shiloh when Grant made his way to the front he was appalled by the presence under shelter of the river banks of a multitude of fugitives, demoralized and panic-stricken, who ought to have been at the front lying on their bellies and firing at the enemy. Nothing of the kind occurred on either side at the Wilderness. The war school had perfectly educated its pupils.

The losses in these two days of fighting in the Wilderness have never been accurately ascertained, and never will be. The best estimates fix them at about 15,000 or 16,000 men on either side. These losses included, as has already been said, a remarkable number of officers of high grade on both sides. Nothing could be more significant than this of the determination with which the battle was fought.

In the strictest sense of the military term this had been a drawn battle. Neither side had overcome the other and neither had driven the other into retreat. Yet each side has claimed it as a victory upon grounds

which are logical enough in themselves. The Confederates held that by checking Grant and baffling his plan of marching out of the Wilderness, and forcing Lee to a fight in the open, they had accomplished a very distinct victory. The Federals held, that, as they had succeeded in placing their army securely south of the Rapidan and in a position to carry on a further campaign, and that as they had not been so far damaged in the fight as to feel themselves under compulsion of retreat, they were entitled to regard the general result of the two days' fight as a victory for themselves.

There is no doubt whatever that at the end of this struggle the Confederates expected Grant to retire to the northern side of the river, as all his predecessors had done after similar conflicts. When the next morning dawned and Grant still stood firm in their front they were astonished to find him there. Among the men no explanation of his continued presence in the wilderness was forthcoming. In the mind of Lee there was an explanation ready and sufficient. The great Confederate general is reported to have said to his staff on that morning, "Gentleman, at last the Army of the Potomac has a head."

CHAPTER XLVI

Spottsylvania and the Bloody Angle

All day during the seventh of May the two armies lay still. There was a little cavalry fighting at Todd's Tavern, but the two great armies did not again engage each other in conflict. They had tried conclusions here, and each was measurably satisfied with the result.

The question now was where next they should meet each other in arms. Lee had chosen the field of the first onset. It was for Grant to choose the next. And in pursuance of his strategy Grant determined to move by his left flank to Spottsylvania Court House, hoping to reach that position before his adversary could get there, and to seize upon its best strategic points. In that position he would still have the great waterways at his back as a support, and a trustworthy source of supply. His desire was throughout the campaign to thrust his army in between the Army of Northern Virginia and Richmond, and this seemed to be his best opportunity to do so. He had somewhat a shorter line of march, and moreover by taking the initiative he was able to start first. If he was baffled in the attempt it was only by reason of the alertness of Lee's genius which penetrated his purpose, grasped his thought, and promptly acted in contravention of it.

Spottsylvania Court House lay fifteen or sixteen

miles southeast of the Wilderness battlefield, and nearly that far southwest of Fredericksburg. In order that the movement might be made without danger of his army being attacked while in motion, Grant adopted the plan of using the troops on his right as the advance force of his movement towards the left. He did this throughout that campaign by the left flank, always withdrawing the forces on his right, passing them in rear of his main army, and thus making of the movement what is technically known as a countermarch. In this way the advancing troops had always the main army between them and the enemy until they cleared the position occupied, and were well on march toward the new one aimed at. After that, of course, they must take care of themselves, but in the meanwhile the march was begun without discovery on the part of the enemy.

The movement on this occasion was begun at nine o'clock in the evening, on the night of Saturday, May 7. With his extraordinary alertness and penetration Lee anticipated it and obstructed it. He threw a force of cavalry across the roads that Grant's head of column must traverse, and directed it to oppose and delay the movement so far as it was possible to do so. He also sent sappers and miners ahead to fell trees across the road over which Grant must march, then with caution, but with boldness, he set his own columns in motion, sending the head of them to seize upon and hold the strongly strategic positions at Spottsylvania until such time as Grant's movement should so far develop itself as to justify him in moving his whole army into that position. The Federal

cavalry had occupied these strategic positions before the Confederates got there, but they were quickly brushed away, and by the time that the head of Grant's column of infantry and artillery reached Spottsylvania, Lee's advance was in full possession and everywhere throwing up earthworks. The remainder of Lee's forces were quickly brought up, as were those of Grant, and the two great armies again confronted each other, each with set lips, determined to get the better of the other if human resolution could accomplish that purpose.

In the meanwhile Grant had sent Sheridan with a strong force of cavalry to ride around the Confederates as Stewart had thrice done around the Federal army, to disturb their communications, and obstruct their avenues of retreat in case of disaster. His movement was promptly met by the Confederate cavalry under their great leader J. E. B. Stuart, and the two forces fell a-fighting at a point known as the Yellow Tavern, seven or eight miles north of the city of Richmond. There in fierce conflict Stuart met the death which he had always declared that he longed for. He was mortally wounded at the head of his men while making one of those tremendous onsets which it was the pride of his soul to conduct. With Stuart disabled, the Confederate cavalry was left without a leader capable of making the most of its dash and prowess, and Sheridan succeeded in breaking through the outer lines around Richmond, but not in going farther. He retreated and rejoined the army under Grant on the twenty-fifth of May, seventeen days after the time of his setting out.

The first casualty of importance at Spottsylvania was the killing of General Sedgwick by a Confederate sharpshooter. This one sharpshooter had already sent his bullets through twenty men as the Federals were trying to establish themselves in position. So deadly was his aim that in spite of the distance he seemed to be able to hit anybody that he shot at. After a little experience with him the men who were engaged in erecting fortifications shrank from their work, and General Sedgwick rebuked them, saying that at such a distance the best sharpshooter couldn't hit an elephant. A moment later he fell dead pierced through by a bullet from the sharpshooter's rifle.

By the evening of the ninth of May the two armies confronted each other, each behind its breastworks. A little fighting of a severe character occurred that evening on the Confederate left, both sides losing heavily, and neither gaining any advantage of moment. On the next day the fighting was renewed with desperation upon both sides. Several times the Federals reached the Confederate breastworks, and held them for a few moments, but upon every occasion they were driven back. In their retreat they carried away some prisoners, some battle flags, and other trophies, but none of the guns that they had temporarily captured.

Thus the fighting on the tenth of May resulted in no advantage to either side. Grant had failed completely in his effort to place himself at Spottsylvania in advance of Lee, and thus to thrust his army in between Lee and Richmond, compelling the Confederate general to make a race for it under disadvan-

tageous circumstances, and by a longer line than that which Grant must follow. Thus when the fight began at Spottsylvania Lee was still between Grant and Richmond, and the fighting itself was an attempt to dislodge him by assault, by an army outnumbering his by two to one or more.

On the eleventh of May throughout the day and night it rained incessantly, and enormously. The whole earth in that region was converted into a quagmire impracticable for the movement of artillery, and almost impassable even by infantry. Lee's men in the trenches were forced to stand upon fence rails and sticks and whatever else they could get to keep themselves from sinking to their knees in the glutinous red clay, softened as it was by the rain. It was impossible even to send couriers with orders in the rear of either line in the rain, and so the orders were passed, particularly during the night, by word of mouth, from one man to another up and down the lines. The conditions were of a kind to try the courage and endurance of soldiers far more severely than either battle or hard marching could. Yet through it all these veterans on either side maintained their courage and resolutely refused to let even the rains of that Virginia springtime wash the starch out of their stamina.

The two lines were so near together at many points that pickets could not be thrown out even into the rifle pits which are customarily placed between works thus closely confronting each other. It was impossible to see for any distance in any direction, and at all hours of that terrible night there was a constant

threat of sudden advance and surprise upon one point or another of the Confederate line. These threats were reported by word of mouth, as has been explained, from one soldier to another along the line. A message would come "Look out on the left," or "Look out on the right; enemy advancing." About two o'clock in the morning, after there had been a lull of half an hour in the tremendous downpour, the rain began again in bucketsfull and some wag in the Confederate lines started a message, "Get out of the wet." In spite of their discomforts, of their fatigue, of their exhaustion from sleeplessness, and of their momentary danger, the gallant fellows took it up and passed it from one to another, as they might have passed any order of General Lee's. This incident is related here merely by way of showing into what condition of cheerful endurance the men had been wrought by their soldierly experience. It is of value as showing what stuff these contesting armies were made of in the spring of 1864, when the issues of the war lay in their hands.

The Confederate line at one point presented what is known in military parlance as a salient angle,—that is to say, a bend, the point of which projects toward the enemy, so that the enemy advancing toward it, and upon either side of it, has the advantage of shooting down along the lines of the men defending it on either side. This is called enfilading, and it especially endangers a position of the kind. Grant decided to begin the fighting on the twelfth by an early assault upon this Confederate salient. During the night he carefully disposed his forces with a view to

this operation, hoping thus early in the morning to break through the Confederate line, cut it in two and assail each of its divisions in rear and at disadvantage.

In this operation he was greatly favored by a dense fog, which rendered it impossible for his enemy to discover his movements, or even the presence of his moving columns at a greater distance than a few yards. Hancock had charge of this particular movement, and he succeeded before his movement was discovered in gaining a position very near to the exposed salient angle, and from that position his men rushed with a wild hurrah upon the works. The Confederates stood their ground as such veterans were at that time always expected to do.

Hancock's men climbed over the breastworks, and the fighting that ensued was that of desperadoes in mortal conflict. They were foes of a sort that knew no flinching and no fear. They fought hand to hand. They thrust each other through with bayonets. They brained each other with clubbed muskets. Cannoneers on the Confederate side finding the infantry support inadequate used their rammerheads, their linstock points, and even the handspikes of their guns with deadly effect. Those of the artillerymen who had none of these instruments to use did that which is not often done in war. They drew their short artillery swords—blades resembling the bowie knife in shortness—and fought with them to the death.

So sudden was the onset and so overwhelming was Hancock's force that in spite of its desperate resistance the small Confederate body holding the salient was overcome, and the greater part of it captured.

It consisted of General Edward Johnson's division of about 3,000 men, together with twenty guns, which were immediately turned upon such of the Confederates as had succeeded in avoiding capture.

Flushed by this success, and believing that they had finally broken the Confederate line, Hancock's men pushed on towards Spottsylvania Court House, until they encountered a second line of entrenchments, which, in spite of rain and fog and mud had been thrown up during that night of storm across the rear of that dangerously salient angle. Those entrenchments were manned by the flower of Lee's army, and they quickly brought to nought the triumphant march of an enemy who had supposed that his hard work was, for the time being, done,—that the Army of Northern Virginia was broken in two, and must seek safety in flight.

It was here more conspicuously than anywhere else in all the history of the war that the superb staying power of Lee's veterans was illustrated. At the salient their line of battle had been successfully broken, but at a brief distance in rear of the salient that line of battle stood fast and irresistible to any assault that even Hancock's victorious veterans might make upon it. Here we have a single fact which might be multiplied many times over, which serves to show how and why it was that this contest of 1864 was from beginning to end so bloody and so determined. The time had come when the morale of both armies was perfect, and when each was invincible, except by the pressure of utterly overwhelming force. The time had come when the Americans who were

fighting on those Virginia fields were perfect soldiers, immeasurably superior in stamina, in courage, and in devotion to any regulars who were ever drilled into obedience and endurance in any country of the world, before or since. This, the historian believes to be a simple statement of fact which should be recorded in history and not forgotten or overlooked by those persons, who in the twentieth century shall study the story of what Americans did during the first hundred years of the Republic's vigorous life.

But the fighting already described was only a shadowy beginning of that which was presently to follow. The Confederates were not content with having hurled back Hancock's assault at the base of their captured salient, but were determined to retake the salient itself, although the difficulty of doing so was appalling. What had been a salient angle in possession of the Confederates became a reëntering angle as soon as it was held by the Federals. For the Confederates to push their force into it was for them to encounter a destructive fire from either side, not only enfilading their lines, but sweeping them from front and rear at the same moment. Nevertheless, and with a courage too splendid to be fitly characterized by any adjective in the language, they promptly followed Hancock's men as the latter retired under pressure to the entrenchments of the salient angle. At that point the Federal troops leaping over the works to their own side of them, used them as their own in the defensive operation. Time after time—five times in all—the Confederates pressed forward, enduring the bloodiest slaughter in their attempt to

retake the angle, amid a fire of hell from the front, both flanks and diagonally from the rear. All day long this struggle was continued. The Confederates in spite of the slaughter, and despite all their disadvantages, forced their way, step by step, back to the captured works, and there fought hand to hand over the small embankment with their enemy on the other side.

The embankment itself was a frail structure of logs, from which the rain had washed away the greater part of the earth that was intended to give it a power of resistance against fire. Huddled on either side of it—the Federals on the one side and the Confederates on the other—they fought over and through it, throughout the hours of that terrible day. Sometimes they thrust their bayonets through the crevices in the log barrier, and thus ran each other through. Sometimes they fired through those crevices upon enemies less than ten feet away. Sometimes the men on one side or the other would suddenly mount upon the small parapet, and with bullet or bayonet, assail their adversaries on the other side.

This spot in the annals of the war is fitly called "The bloody angle at Spottsylvania." The fighting there lasted throughout the day and until after midnight of the twelfth. It was a fighting of blind fury from beginning to end. It was such a struggle as few wars have ever given birth to, and it illustrated in the most conspicuous way imaginable that American heroism which made our war so terrible in its conduct, and so glorious in its memory. At every point in the bloody angle when the fighting was done dead

men lay piled, one upon another, sometimes five deep. Wounded men were often imprisoned under the dead, unable to extricate themselves, at a time when there were none to rescue them. Every bush and every sapling that constituted the thicket there was cut away by a stream of bullets, as grass is before a mower's scythe. Even an oak tree nearly two feet thick was worn in two near its base by the continual and incessant stroke of leaden balls until it fell, crushing some of the Confederates who were fighting beneath its branches.

Is not the question a pertinent one—what did the little charge of the six hundred at Balaklava amount to as an exhibition of human heroism in comparison with such a fight as this? Has the age of poetry passed? And have the poets forgotten their cunning that not one of them has ever yet celebrated in song such American deeds as these, or as Pickett's charge at Gettysburg, or as Grant's assault at Cold Harbor, or as the six matchless advances of the Federals upon Marye's Heights at Fredericksburg? Or is it merely that our poets have been embarrassed by the very richness of our Confederate war in deeds of derring-do?

On neither side have the losses in this struggle at the death angle been separately computed with even such tolerable accuracy as might justify the historian in the use of round numbers. But the slaughter, it is certain, was as terrific as at any other point of fighting during the entire war, with the possible exception of Cold Harbor, a little later.

After midnight the Confederates withdrew from

the apex of the angle to their second line at its base, and for that day the fighting was over.

Concerning this struggle Dr. Rossiter Johnson in his "History of the War of Secession" has written a sentence so wise and so just that no apology is needed for incorporating it in the text of the present work. He wrote, "If courage were all that a nation required, there was courage enough at Spottsylvania, on either side of the entrenchments, to have made a nation out of every state in the Union."

CHAPTER XLVII

Cold Harbor and on to Petersburg

A week of desperate fighting had convinced Grant that he could not break through or overlap or force back Lee's stubborn line of defense at Spottsylvania. After another week devoted to a study of the problem the Federal commander decided to make another movement by his left flank, similar to that which he had made from the Wilderness. He had in the meantime replenished his supplies of food and ammunition, and in spite of continuous fighting in a small way throughout the week of pause, he had succeeded in reorganizing such of his forces as had been broken, and in resting those of them whose previous exertions had been most exhausting.

On the nineteenth the Confederates under Ewell sharply assailed the Federal right, and a considerable conflict ensued. But in its proportions it was insignificant as compared with the fighting done a week before.

Grant's next objective point was the North Anna river at or near Hanover Court House. He moved one corps at a time, keeping them twelve hours apart, by way of confusing his enemy, and if possible bringing on a fight in the open field before Lee could have time to throw up those hasty entrenchments which had hitherto, slender as they were, given him a great

advantage in the struggle. This hope was disappointed. Lee was too wily a strategist not to perceive and avoid his enemy's purpose. Moving hurriedly and upon a somewhat shorter line than Grant's he reached and crossed the North Anna before Grant got there, and so established his line that Grant could not assail it without dividing his own army into three parts, each separated from the others by a bend of the river, and each in danger of being crushed before it could be supported. There was some severe fighting at this point, involving a loss of two or three thousand men on either side, but nothing occurred that could be called a pitched battle, or that deserves more than a mention in comparison with the other splendid contests of that campaign.

Having satisfied himself that there was no thoroughfare here, Grant determined upon a still further movement by his left flank, similar to those already made. He moved on the night of the twenty-sixth, and finding Lee still in his pathway he almost immediately moved again, his destination now being Cold Harbor. The Confederates promptly moved in the same direction, and the two armies met at various points in sharp conflict, but no general action resulted. In the end they came face to face at Cold Harbor with Lee again behind hastily constructed breastworks.

Lee instantly called to his aid all the troops that could be spared from the defenses of Richmond, less than ten miles away, while Grant brought heavy reinforcements for himself from Butler's army, south of the James.

Again Lee had beaten his adversary in a race to secure the commanding ground at the place of meeting. He had placed his army in a position where it could be assailed only in front, and the men, who had learned the use of spade and shovel as expertly as they already knew the use of the bullet and the bayonet, had been favored by the nature of the soil in throwing up a line of breastworks which they felt themselves competent to hold against any assault. Lee's right rested on the Chickahominy river, and his left upon a maze of little streams between which there were impracticable swamps. The river in his rear was at that season very low and easily fordable at almost any point at which a crossing might be attempted, so that it offered no barrier to a retreat of the Confederates, if retreat should be forced upon them. Best of all, as a source of confidence to Lee was the superb morale of his army. It might be possible for an enemy to carry his works and force a way through his lines though that was exceedingly improbable in view of the stubbornness with which his Confederates had learned to fight. But even should that improbable thing be accomplished, Lee perfectly knew that his men would none of them run away, but that they would stand fast by their colors, and fall back fighting to the works before Richmond. The time had completely gone by when panic or demoralization was to be reckoned upon as even a possible factor in either of these two veteran armies. They had both of them thoroughly learned the trade of war. They were both composed of as good human material as was ever employed in the construction of

an army. They were both commanded from top to bottom by officers who knew their business, and were disposed to do it at their best.

Here, then, were all the conditions for a great battle and it was for Grant to determine whether or not that battle should be fought. His critics have contended that he should have determined that question in the negative—that the position of Lee was too strong to invite direct assault, or to offer his assailant a tolerable chance of victory. It was at any rate certain, that no assault could be made which would not involve tremendous slaughter among the assailants, while no assault unless successful beyond any promise that the conditions held forth could possibly inflict upon the Confederates any compensating loss, even if reckoned upon the arithmetical hypothesis that Grant could afford to lose two or three men to his adversary's one.

Writing near the end of his life, General Grant said in his "Memoirs":

"I have always regretted that the last assault at Cold Harbor was ever made. . . . At Cold Harbor no advantage whatever was gained to compensate for the heavy loss we sustained. Indeed the advantages other than those of relative losses were on the Confederate side."

But the assault was made. In spite of the adverse conditions, Grant determined to assail Lee there, and if possible to force a passage through his lines. It should be explained that during all these movements the two armies had kept themselves always within striking distance of each other, and that conflicts be-

tween them had occurred at every step—conflicts which earlier in the war would have been reckoned as battles of great moment, but which at this stage of the struggle were regarded merely as passing incidents of a campaign marked by tremendous battles. At Cold Harbor there was very heavy fighting on the second of June, when Lee took the offensive and bent back the right of Grant's line, thus greatly strengthening the Confederate position of defense.

The great battle came, however, on the morning of the third of June, just as the darkness of night began to gray into the dawn. There was no strategy employed in this action. There was nothing in it of tactics, grand or petty. As one historian has said, it was a fierce battle depending for its results "upon the brute strength of the forces engaged." Grant simply hurled nearly his whole army against Lee at a single point. The fighting covered scarcely more than a brigade front of Lee's line, and upon that short front Lee promptly concentrated troops until they stood six deep at the breastworks, the men in rear loading rifles, and passing them to those in front to fire. The Federals were advancing against strong earthworks, and through a tangled mass of abattis or trees felled with their branches toward the enemy, and with their limbs sharpened to obstruct a march.

The action lasted scarcely more than twenty minutes. Yet in that brief time Grant lost, according to his own report, 10,500 men, or at the rate of more than five hundred men per minute, or nearly ten men per second. When General Lee sent a messenger to General A. P. Hill, who commanded at that point,

to ask for a report of the results Hill pointed to the dead bodies of Federal troops piled high upon each other, and for answer said, "Tell General Lee it is the same all along my front."

The Confederate loss in this action was reported at about 1,000 men.

This was the most staggering blow that Grant had ever received in battle, and the news of it appalled the authorities at Washington, and greatly depressed the people throughout the North. That a little army like Lee's, reduced by this time to less than 50,000 men, should have inflicted such a defeat upon an adversary whose forces were generally estimated at 120,000 men seemed to those persons who do not understand the conditions of battle to indicate a lack either of commanding capacity on the part of General Grant or of fighting capacity on the part of the army under his command.

Both of these judgments were clearly mistaken. It was perhaps an error on General Grant's part to assail Lee in his strong position at Cold Harbor, but it was a mistake prompted by that boldness which so often achieves conspicuous results in war. In criticizing such operations it is always necessary to bear in mind that "war is a hazard of possibilities, probabilities, luck and ill luck." At Cold Harbor there was, to say the least, a possibility that Grant, with his overwhelmingly superior numbers, might break through the Confederate lines, and force his way into Richmond. There was the hazard of such failure as that which the Federal army in fact met with. For the sake of the possibility Grant accepted the hazard.

Had he won there would have been nothing but praise throughout the North for a boldness which had achieved so conspicuous a success. As he lost in the hazard instead, there was bitter criticism which has not ceased even unto this day.

Fortunately for the Federal cause, the administration at Washington had at last learned that uniform, continued, and complete success is a thing not to be expected of any commander in the field. The administration, therefore, did not withdraw its confidence from Grant or put some other in his place because Lee had thus far baffled him in his endeavors, or because in this instance he had met with bloody defeat at Lee's hands. As for Grant himself, he was always a man of calm mind in no way given to hysterical exaltations on the one hand, or morbid depressions of spirit on the other. He accepted his defeat at Cold Harbor as a mere incident in a campaign which he was determined to carry on to the end in the best way he could.

The campaign had now endured for almost exactly one month. During that time Grant had lost about 60,000 men and 3,000 officers. Lee's loss has been estimated at about 18,000 men, with a proportionate number of officers. The campaign in the field was now practically over, and it remained for Grant to settle his army before Richmond and Petersburg as a besieging force. The object of the campaign in the field, as we have seen, and as General Grant has himself declared, was to crush Lee's army if possible, and failing that to cripple it for defense before his own siege of the Confederate capital should begin.

He had succeeded, though at enormous cost to himself, in reducing the numerical strength of his adversary by about one third. Such reduction was undoubtedly less than he had hoped for, but at any rate it was something to the good, so far as his operations were concerned, and it left him in better case for the beginning of that siege during which, as he well knew, he could limitlessly reinforce himself while his adversary had no reserves anywhere to draw upon, even sufficiently to make good those daily losses which defensive operations of necessity involve.

After a week of waiting in indecision Grant determined upon his plan of future operations. He decided that to assail Richmond from the north or east was rendered hopelessly impracticable by the demonstrated alertness of Lee in always interposing the Army of Northern Virginia between the Army of the Potomac and its objective. Halleck proposed from Washington that Grant should place himself on the north and east of the Confederate capital, and conduct siege operations from those directions, thus carrying out that traditional and paralyzing policy which had prevailed during the whole of Halleck's term of command, of keeping the Army of the Potomac always interposed between Lee and Washington. If Halleck had been still Grant's superior in command, there is no doubt that he would have insisted to the end upon this plan of operations, dictated as it always had been by an overweening anxiety lest some Confederate force should succeed in entering the Federal capital city. Grant was a man of very different type. He was not given to fearful imagin-

ings. He saw no reason why those in charge of Washington city—fortified and armed to the teeth as that city was—should not themselves defend the capital against any force that Lee might spare from in front of the Army of the Potomac, so long as that army should continue its operations against the Confederate general with vigor, determination and ceaseless activity. He decided, therefore, to transfer his army from the northern to the southern side of the James river, to seize upon Petersburg, if that should prove possible, to invest that town, if it could not be taken by assault, and by continued movements to the left to cut off Lee's communications.

Here a little geographical explanation is necessary. Petersburg lies on the Appomattox river, twenty-two miles due south of Richmond. It was connected with Richmond by a line of railway and this line was extended from Petersburg southward, by way of Weldon, North Carolina. The Weldon railroad constituted Lee's main line of communication with the coast country south of him. From Petersburg west, extended another line of railway to Lynchburg and beyond, while from Richmond a third line, the Richmond and Danville road, extended southwesterly to Danville, crossing the south side railroad at Burkesville, or as the place was more familiarly known, the Junction.

These three lines of railway constituted Lee's sole means of communication with the country south and west of Richmond. It was Grant's purpose, while holding Lee rigidly to his defensive works, to push his own columns around Lee's right and into his rear,

threatening and ultimately cutting these three lines of communication.

Grant hoped so far to conceal his purposes from his wily adversary as to take Petersburg by surprise and capture it, thus at once and easily breaking two of the three lines of Confederate communication, and gaining possession of a position which McClellan two years before had seen and declared to be the military key to Richmond. In aid of this purpose of surprise he set men at work, throwing up fortifications to the north of Richmond, and sent large bodies of cavalry to operate destructively on the north and west of that city, while he held at and near Cold Harbor a sufficiently threatening line in Lee's front to give the impression that he had determined upon making his siege approach in the same way in which McClellan had sought to take the city two years before. He transferred his base of supplies to the White House on York river, where McClellan's base had been.

Then he began his movement upon Petersburg. Sending a large part of his force by water, he moved the rest across the James river by pontoon bridges, all his operations being beyond sight of the Confederates.

In his effort to take Petersburg by surprise he was very nearly successful. At the beginning of the movement he had Butler under his command and well placed south of the James river, with an army of 30,000 men. In anticipation of his own movement with the main army, he ordered Butler to advance at once upon Petersburg, capture that place, and hold it until the Army of the Potomac should come up.

This was a bold movement, and one altogether well planned. But Butler's advance was met at Petersburg with determination by the small force present there, aided by the home guards of elderly men, and men otherwise unfit for the regular service. These men, though unused to the work of the soldier, did that work well until they were slowly driven back and forced to fight in the streets of the city itself. But before Butler could bring up his main body to support the attack he had made with the head of his column, Beauregard arrived upon the scene with a small force of Confederate veterans from the south. That always active commander at once fell with fury upon the Federal advance, and drove it back to the hills outside the city, where, during the night a slender line of earthworks was hastily thrown up by the men with their bayonets, and such spades and shovels as could be found in the city.

In the meantime Lee had penetrated Grant's design, and as usual had met it with celerity and promptitude. Marching his men at a double quick which would speedily have killed off two thirds of them if they had been in less perfect training than they were, he pushed them into Petersburg, and out upon the hills that guard the city in time to meet Grant there in a strong position which diligent labor quickly rendered stronger with earthworks.

Thus began that historic siege of Petersburg which was destined to last for many months, and which was marked daily by that heroism of endurance on both sides which is after all, more admirable than the heroism of dash and daring.

The story of that siege will be told in a later chapter. Meanwhile other events had been occurring in other quarters, some account of which must first be given in order that the reader shall fully understand the course and progress of the war during that fighting summer of 1864.

CHAPTER XLVIII

The Confederate Cruisers

From the beginning of the war the Federals had enjoyed the very great advantage of having possession of a navy, and of shipyards in which that navy could be increased almost at will, while the Confederates had neither ships nor shipyards. On the Federal side it was easily possible to increase the naval force by drawing into the service available vessels of every kind—steamers, merchantmen, tugs, and even double-ender ferry boats from New York Harbor. The guns with which to arm these vessels were at hand, and they were quickly made ready for service by slight alterations which the shipbuilders of the North were prepared to make at exceedingly short notice. On the Southern side there was next to nothing in this way. For a time the Norfolk navy yard was in the possession of the Confederates, and as we have seen in a former chapter they availed themselves of its working resources so far as to prepare the *Merrimac* or *Virginia,* and send her out into Hampton Roads, upon her mission of destruction. But presently a change in the military situation made it necessary for them to blow up that ironclad ship, and they had no means of providing another to take her place. At Charleston two or three ironclad gunboats were constructed, together with several torpedo boats that did

more or less execution; but so inadequate were the means of construction on the southern side that these boats accomplished very little. On the Mississippi some rams were created out of old hulks, which did some execution, but which were speedily destroyed.

On the open sea the Confederacy had no ships of its own afloat, except the *Sumter,* a sailing craft heavily sparred, and commanded by Raphael Semmes, perhaps the most expert sailor and daring fighter among all the men who had resigned from the Federal navy to engage in the Confederate service. That ship, daringly commanded and daringly maneuvered, wrought havoc for a time in the early part of the war, but the days of her usefulness as against steam craft were easily numbered.

Somewhat later a steam vessel, the *Alabama,* was built at Birkenhead in England for the use of Captain Semmes and his daring crew. She was a little thing, only 220 feet long, and built of wood with no protection whatever against an enemy's fire. But she was fleeter than any ship in the American navy, and it was hoped by the Confederates that she might destroy the commerce of the United States upon the high seas without herself meeting with destruction. In spite of the protests of the American minister in London, this ship, all unarmed, was permitted to escape to sea, and at Fayal in the Azores her cannon and coal were put on board of her.

For nearly two years she made herself a terror to American merchantmen, and was the despair of the American navy, which had no ship capable of steaming one half so fast as she could do. In effect she

swept American commerce from the seas, not so much by her captures of American merchantmen as by her perpetual threat of capture which rendered it a bad speculation for any American merchant to send a ship to sea, and thus subject her to the possibility of capture by the *Alabama.*

In June, 1864, the *Alabama* put into the harbor of Cherbourg, France. The *Kearsarge,* a United States war vessel under command of John A. Winslow, lay off the harbor, waiting for the *Alabama* to come out. The one vessel could not attack the other in a neutral port, or within three miles of the shore. But when the *Alabama* steamed out to a distance of perhaps eight miles, she was assailed by the *Kearsarge,* and a fierce battle ensued. The two ships were substantially the same in size, but the *Kearsarge* was a chain protected vessel, stronger in every way than her Confederate adversary, and on that Sunday morning of June nineteenth, 1864, she made short work of the Confederate cruiser. The *Alabama* was quickly riddled, and went down stern foremost. Many of her crew went down with her and perished in the sea. The remainder of them were picked up by a British yacht and carried in safety to England.

There were other Confederate cruisers like unto the *Alabama,* including the *Shenandoah,* the *Florida,* the *Tallahassee,* the *Tacony,* and the *Georgia.* These ships largely aided in that destruction of American commerce in which the *Alabama* had taken the lead. But none of them had so picturesque a career as was that of the *Alabama,* while the careers of all of them are fitly represented by that of Admiral Semmes's ship.

The destructive activities of these ships were afterwards made the subject of an international arbitration, and Great Britain was condemned to pay to the United States an indemnity of $15,500,000 for her neglect of international comity in permitting them to sail from her ports.

CHAPTER XLIX

Sherman's Campaign against Atlanta

The plan by which General Grant hoped to crush the Confederacy during the summer of 1864 and to make an end of the resisting power of its armies has been set forth already. In that plan, as the reader will remember, an operation second in importance only to Grant's own campaign in Virginia was Sherman's southward march from Chattanooga, which was intended to defeat Johnston, seize upon Atlanta, and push forward thence through the heart of the Confederacy, either to Mobile or to Savannah, in either case cutting the Confederacy in two and leaving Lee with no substantial country behind him. Sherman had already in the spring swept through the country from Vicksburg to Chattanooga, paralyzing Confederate resistance there, breaking up all the railroad communications, and opening a wide path on the east of the Mississippi river for any military operations that the Federal Government might decide to institute in that quarter of the country. Then Grant in pursuance of his policy of putting his strongest lieutenants into the most important commands under himself, had ordered Sherman to take control of all the forces in the West, subject to no dictation whatsoever, except such as Grant himself might find occasion to exercise. And in giving Sherman his orders,

Grant steadfastly bore in mind his conviction that Sherman was a general too capable and too energetic to need minute instruction or anything more than general orders. To Sherman he assigned a command and a duty. He left it to Sherman's own judgment so to handle the command as to execute the duty, and accomplish the purpose intended.

Many months earlier Grant had left affairs undirected in a part of the smaller area which he then controlled upon the avowed ground that "Sherman was there." Upon the same principle and in the same abounding confidence in his lieutenant, he thought it sufficient in 1864 to tell Sherman in a general way what he wanted him to do in aid of the general purposes of the campaign, and to leave him to do it in his own way. In scarcely any other act of his life did Grant better illustrate the breadth and strength of his own capacity than he did in thus appreciating and trusting Sherman, and in treating Meade in like manner in Virginia so far as his own presence with Meade's army permitted.

Sherman's problem was difficult of execution, but perfectly simple in its terms. It was his duty to assail Johnston, destroy him if possible, seize upon Atlanta, the great railroad center of the South, and push a column thence to the sea. For the accomplishment of this purpose Sherman had the Army of the Cumberland, commanded by General George H. Thomas, the Army of the Tennessee, commanded by General James B. McPherson, and the Army of the Ohio, commanded by General John M. Scofield. His total fighting force was about 100,000 men.

Opposed to him was Johnston, who lay at Dalton, Georgia, with about 43,000 men.

Sherman had hope of reinforcements sufficient at least to make good his losses on the march which he was about to undertake, while Johnston perfectly knew that he could hope for no reinforcement at all. Sherman had lines of communication over which he could bring to his army 130 carloads of provisions each day. Johnston's men sometimes had scanty rations, and sometimes none at all. He had no secure source of supply in any quarter, as was usually the case with Confederate armies at this period of the war. Lee's army had received a ration of three quarters of a pound of uncooked flour to each man at Spottsylvania just before the movement from that point, and it was three days later—three days of hard fighting and hard marching—before the majority of them received any other rations whatsoever. Johnston's army was similarly starved during the campaign of Atlanta.

On the fifth of May, 1864, at precisely the same time when Grant moved into the Wilderness, Sherman set out on his march to Atlanta. With the true instinct of a fighting commander, he had stripped himself and his army of all encumbering baggage and other superfluities. He had no tent, even for himself. And he boasted in after years that he changed his underclothes only once between Chattanooga and Atlanta. He required all his officers, high and low, except General Thomas, whose health was impaired, to follow his own example of unencumbered movement.

The distance from Chattanooga to Atlanta, as the crow flies, is almost exactly a hundred miles. Johnston's position at Dalton was about fifteen miles southeast of Chattanooga. The country is a hilly and broken one, traversed by many streams which afford good defensive positions to a retiring army, as do also the various gaps among the hills which must be crossed by an army advancing offensively. Johnston was strongly fortified at Dalton and Sherman, not venturing to assail him in his works there, sent McPherson to make a détour, and strike the Confederate lines of communication at Resaca, ten miles or so farther south.

There McPherson found Johnston's men behind earthworks, and wisely or unwisely shrank from attacking them in their defenses. If he could have carried the works at Resaca Johnston's position would have been one of extremest danger from which he could escape only by fighting on all sides at once, and forcing his way through opposing lines, strongly posted and well fortified. But in McPherson's judgment an attack at that point with such force as he had with him was unadvisable. He therefore refrained from attack, and fell back to a secure position in the hills to await the approach of reinforcements. Sherman promptly moved to McPherson's position, only to find that Johnston had also retired from Dalton to Resaca, and had concentrated his entire army there in a strong defensive position.

Even with all his army present Sherman, himself, hesitated to attack Johnston in his works—a fact which seems a sufficient answer to that criticism of

McPherson which has been freely exploited in writings concerning this campaign.

Sherman, however, had so greatly the advantage of Johnston in numbers that he could afford to send large detachments against the Confederate general's communications, while still holding a threatening position of his own in front. This he did with consummate skill, forcing Johnston with his small army to retreat southward following the railroad, and destroying as he went.

Johnston left Resaca on the night of the fifteenth of May, and on the nineteenth took position at Cassville, where he seemed to offer battle to his enemy. But after some sharp skirmishing the Confederate general retreated again during the night of the twentieth to a point south of the Etowah river and to Alatoona.

After a few days of rest and reprovisioning, Sherman moved again, not directly against his antagonist, but by the flank, so as to threaten Marietta and Atlanta itself, which lies only a few miles south of Marietta. By this movement Sherman hoped to force Johnston to abandon his strong position at Alatoona Pass, where he securely held the railroad over which Sherman had need to bring his supplies in any further advance that he might make southward.

Promptly recognizing the purpose of this movement, Johnston marched westward to assail his enemy in flank. The two armies met at New Hope Church, a point a few miles west of Marietta, and a few miles northwest of Atlanta. Here for six days there was continuous and very bloody fighting, both armies

doing their work in a fashion that rivaled even that of the contending forces in Virginia.

By virtue of his superior numbers, Sherman was able to make strong detachments to assail the communications and the flanks of Johnston's army, and thus to compel him to fall back again to a strong defensive position on the railroad above Marietta, on Kenesaw, Lost and Pine Mountains.

Against this position Sherman advanced with caution, strongly entrenching himself in its front. There the fighting was continuous and costly of human life on both sides. There it was that General Leonidas Polk, Protestant Episcopal Bishop of Louisiana, who had been educated at West Point for the military service, but who had afterwards risen to the highest place of honor in his church as a Bishop, and had at the outbreak of the war entered the Confederate service in which he had risen to the rank of major general, was instantly killed by a cannon shot which Sherman himself had directed to be fired into a group of Confederate officers of whom he caught sight on a hill. This was on June 14.

If he had had anything like Sherman's force with which to contest Sherman's advance, Johnston's position at this time would have been one of peculiar strength and opportunity. But his line was ten miles long, and the ground was so broken that the reinforcement of one part of it by another was peculiarly difficult, while, on the other hand, Sherman's assailing position was geographically such that he might concentrate forces at will and without observation against any point in Johnston's line which he might select for assault.

Without further following the details of this struggle it is enough to say that day by day Johnston slowly retired toward Atlanta, obstinately fighting at every point and baffling all the efforts of his brilliant assailant to break through his lines, or to take him by surprise in the rear of either of his flanks.

On the morning of the twenty-seventh of June Sherman determined to end this struggle by a tremendous assault upon his enemy's entrenchments. At two points a mile apart he hurled his columns against them with all the fury that it was possible to infuse into the minds and the conduct of veteran soldiers. At the same time he ordered all other troops on all other parts of the line to maintain an incessant fire by way of preventing the removal of troops from the unassailed parts of Johnston's lines, for the reinforcement of those defending the points of special attack.

It was Sherman's hope to break through Johnston's lines, cut his army in twain, hold one half of it in position by stubborn fighting and crush the other half by a desperate rush. This plan was baffled only by the desperate courage and splendid obstinacy of the fighting on the Confederate side. The Federal columns advanced to the charge with all the determination that is possible even to the best of veteran troops. The Confederates resisted with a like determination, mowing down their adversaries by a withering fire from behind the breastworks, and so far depleting their strength as to render it impossible for them to force their way over or through the resisting lines. A very few of Sherman's men succeeded in reaching

the Confederate works, and these were promptly shot down or made prisoners. Sherman's loss in this attempt was more than 2,500 men, while the Confederate loss was less than one third as great.

Thus defeated in his attempt to push his way to Atlanta, while holding on to his communications in rear, Sherman now determined upon a desperate move which violated all the traditions of war and all the teachings of the books on strategy, but which both Lee and Grant had boldly adopted and with success, on other and most notable occasions. Loading his wagons with ten days' supplies of food and ammunition he decided to abandon his communications altogether, move independently of them, and trust to the fortunes of war for a success which might justify the daring of his endeavor. He had tried and failed to force Johnston back to Atlanta. He now determined to maneuver him into such retreat and in the course of his maneuvering boldly to take the risk of the destruction or the capture of his own army.

His plan was to swing his entire army—foot loose from its communications—around Johnston's flank, and to strike the railroad in the Confederate general's rear, between Marietta and Atlanta. If he could succeed in doing this, he would easily compel Johnston to make a hasty retreat upon the defenses of Atlanta. But should he fail in doing it he would have on his hands an army in the field, destitute alike of provisions and ammunition so soon at least, as the supplies it carried with it should be consumed. In that event he must surrender to a foe vastly inferior to himself in numbers, for no army can long live without food

and no army can fight after its ammunition is expended.

Thus Sherman undertook to accomplish certain great military operations within ten days' time, with the certainty present to his mind that should he fail he must fail disastrously, sacrifice all the achievement which he had set out to gain, and possibly even surrender an army that outnumbered its adversary far more than two to one.

Following the same plan which Grant was following in Virginia but by reverse process, Sherman on the night of July second made a movement by his right flank southward, withdrawing first the troops on his left, and passing them to the right, in rear of troops still holding the lines.

Johnston was quick to penetrate Sherman's purpose, and by way of defeating it he promptly abandoned his position, and fell back to the Chattahoochee river, which closely flanks Atlanta on the northwest. Sherman had hoped that Johnston would attempt the immediate crossing of that stream, and he therefore hurried forward his strongest divisions, in the hope of catching his enemy in the act, and assailing him at a disadvantage. But Johnston was too wily for that. He had prepared for himself in advance a line of fortifications along the Chattahoochee, which Sherman has described as one of the strongest pieces of field fortifications he ever saw.

Here Johnston briefly paused while Sherman prepared to turn his position by crossing the river both above and below. The works, however, gave Johnston the opportunity he desired to make his crossing

unmolested, and with his little handful of men after his brilliant and sturdily fighting retreat, before an army heavily outnumbering his own Johnston retired to the defenses of Atlanta.

Then on the seventeenth of July came a change of commanders on the Confederate side which did more than anything else that happened or could have happened during the campaign, to help forward Sherman's success. Angrily and with insulting comment, the Confederate authorities removed Johnston from command and ordered him to turn over his authority to General John B. Hood.

In a subordinate position Hood had demonstrated a vigorous fighting capacity. He had not before commanded an army, and in the opinion of those who had directed his operations, he was a man peculiarly unfit to command an army. General Longstreet once said of him, "Hood is one of the best division commanders I ever knew. He would fight anybody anywhere, at any time. But he has no more discretion than any pugnacious schoolboy might be expected to manifest."

Hood's proceedings at and after Atlanta certainly justified this judgment of a great general who had had full opportunity to observe his conduct and estimate his capacities. For surely at no point in the war was a situation more blunderingly or more bravely handled than was that at Atlanta under Hood. If that general had had any discretion at all he must have seen that it was the one function of his army to delay, embarrass and prevent Sherman's march through Georgia to the sea. Yet no sooner was that

march undertaken than Hood abandoned all effort to check it, left Sherman free to do as he might, and himself marched northward upon a wild-goose chase of campaigning in pursuit of the pot of gold at the farther end of the rainbow. With all that we shall deal hereafter.

Hood's reckless impetuosity promptly manifested itself. Abandoning all of Johnston's precautions, and quitting his defenses, Hood hurled column after column upon the enemy on the twentieth of July and succeeding days, only to have them broken to pieces in a mad endeavor to accomplish the impossible. He inflicted heavy losses upon Sherman's army, to be sure, but his madness entailed upon his own force losses which it could far less well afford. There is no doubt whatever that his impetuosity, which some critics have characterized as foolhardiness, greatly aided Sherman in his purpose of capturing Atlanta.

Beaten in these insane ventures Hood was slowly forced back upon the inner defenses of the town, but he had not yet learned his lesson. As late as the twenty-second of the month he again moved out of his fortifications and assailed Sherman with a vigor which would have been praiseworthy had he possessed a force adequate to his undertaking. Seven times he pushed his men forward to the assault, and seven times he was bloodily repulsed. It was gallant fighting that he did, but fighting ill directed and foolishly undertaken. To paraphrase the familiar quotation, it was magnificent, but it was not war. So far as the facts are ascertainable, it appears that Hood's losses greatly exceeded those which he inflicted upon his

enemy, a very serious circumstance in view of the fact of his greatly inferior numbers.

On the twenty-seventh of July Sherman again moved by his right flank in the attempt to cut the railroad lines south of Atlanta. On the twenty-eighth Hood assailed him violently, and a severe action occurred involving heavy losses on both sides. Thus far in the campaign, according to the official reports, the Confederates had lost 8,841 men, and the Federals 9,917.

The campaign had been accompanied by various and extensive cavalry raids, chiefly on the part of the Federal troops. On one of these raids the Federal General Stoneman was captured with 700 of his men, while General McCook, who was to have met and cooperated with him, lost the greater part of his force as prisoners.

Continuing his southward movements by the right flank Sherman at last succeeded in placing his army south of Atlanta, where a deal of hard fighting occurred.

The position thus taken up by the Federals rendered it imperative that Hood should either assail and crush his foe or make such escape as he could from Atlanta. His efforts to crush his foe had failed too conspicuously for even so venturesome a commander to renew them, and accordingly on the night of September first Hood destroyed all that he could of government property, and withdrew to a strong position eastward of the town. Sherman immediately occupied Atlanta, and quickly made an impregnable fortress of it.

His army now lay fortified almost in the center of what remained of the Confederacy. A pause for reorganization, recuperation and the bringing in of supplies was all that remained to him before he should undertake that march to the sea by which Grant had ordered him again to cut the Confederacy in twain. He expected to make that march in daily and hourly conflict with Hood's forces. But as we shall see hereafter, when the story of that matter is told, he made the march in fact, with no opposition at all, beyond that of some handfuls of cavalry, for the reason that Hood, after the surrender of Atlanta, had gone rainbow chasing northward into Tennessee.

CHAPTER L

The Bay Fight at Mobile

In the meanwhile another important blow had been struck in pursuance of Grant's comprehensive plan of destroying the Confederate capacity of resistance.

The reader will doubtless remember that when Farragut captured New Orleans in April, 1862, he desired at once to move against Mobile in the hope and confident expectation of capturing and closing all those Confederate ports upon which, as blockade running centers, the Southerners relied for the export of their cotton, and the import of arms, ammunition and clothing. From this purpose Farragut was diverted by the peremptory orders of civilians in the navy department at Washington, and it was not until more than two years later that he was permitted to act upon a plan which common sense had dictated from the beginning. In the meanwhile the Confederates, with that energy and ceaseless determination which characterized all their activities, had been daily and hourly rendering the capture of their ports more and more difficult. At Mobile they had strengthened the fortifications and mounted destructively heavy guns in their casemates and upon their parapets. They had strewn the harbor thick with torpedoes of every kind then known to the military science of destruction. When at last in August, 1864, Farragut

was permitted to undertake that enterprise against Mobile which would have been easy and nearly bloodless, if he had been allowed to undertake it two years and three months earlier, he had before him one of the most difficult tasks that was set for any naval commander in this war to accomplish.

Early on the morning of August fifth, Farragut put his fleet in motion to enter Mobile bay. The entrance is a narrow one and was obstructed by every device that engineering ingenuity could place in the pathway of an invading fleet. The only passageway into the harbor lay between Fort Morgan on Mobile Point, and Fort Gaines on Dauphin Island, three miles away. Two miles of this narrow passageway had been completely obstructed by the driving of innumerable piles into the sands, thus forming a fence through which the stoutest ship could not force its way. From the end of this pile fence eastward toward Fort Morgan there extended a quadruple line of destructive torpedoes. The only open way into the harbor was a narrow passage left for the use of blockade runners, directly under the guns of Fort Morgan.

Inside the bay there was a Confederate fleet of considerable strength, including one ironclad ram, and many heavily armed wooden gunboats. The bay was also thickly strewn with mines and torpedoes, the exact location of which was known of course to the Confederate officers, but entirely unknown to Farragut and his captains.

On the fourth of August a strong land force under General Gordon Granger succeeded in making a

landing on Dauphin Island. This gave to Farragut the support he had desired from the land side. His time had at last come, and with four ironclad monitors, seven wooden vessels, all heavily armed, and a fleet of gunboats he advanced toward the mouth of the bay, a little after daylight on the morning of August 5, 1864.

During almost half an hour before Farragut's ships were in a position from which they could render their own fire effective, the fire from the Confederate forts and still more from the Confederate fleet that lay just inside the entrance line, played havoc with the wooden ships of Farragut's squadron. His flagship, the *Hartford,* had her mainmast shot away and many of her crew destroyed. Still Farragut pushed onward without a moment's hesitation at any point until he brought his ships into a position from which they could effectively return the Confederate fire. The heavier metal of his guns quickly and disastrously told upon the Confederate defenses. But these continued to belch out destruction in spite of any crippling that had been done to them, and for a time the fleet suffered terribly.

In order that he might see everything that occurred and direct the conflict with full knowledge of all its details, Farragut mounted to the rigging of his flagship, and a quartermaster lashed him to the spars in order that he might not fall to the deck, in the event of his receiving a wound.

One of Farragut's monitors, the *Tecumseh,* was quickly destroyed in an attempt to pass over the line of torpedoes in order to engage the Confederate ram,

Tennessee, at close quarters. The *Monitor* encountered one of the torpedoes, and its explosion sent her to the bottom so suddenly that her commander and most of her crew perished with her.

The *Brooklyn* had been set to lead the advance with Farragut's flagship following immediately in her wake. The *Brooklyn* was provided with an apparatus for removing torpedoes in advance of her, but the apparatus was by no means a perfect one, and when the commander of that ship discovered the presence of torpedoes almost immediately under his bows, he stopped his vessel and began to back her. The whole fleet was now under a terrific fire, and the maintenance of its order was of the most vital importance. Farragut saw in a moment that the backing of the *Brooklyn* must result not only in halting the entire line under a destructive fire, but in throwing it into hopeless confusion. It was then that he gave his celebrated order, "Go on, damn the torpedo!" But as the *Brooklyn* still hesitated, Farragut immediately pushed the *Hartford* past that vessel, and himself took the lead of the line with his flagship, "damning the torpedoes."

Having crippled the forts and forced his way past the entrance into the harbor, Farragut ordered all his gunboats which had been lashed to the wooden vessels to cut loose, and assail the enemy's fleet. This they did with vigor and promptitude, capturing or destroying nearly all of the Confederate vessels.

There still remained, however, the Confederate ram, *Tennessee,* a powerful ironclad ship, commanded by a gallant captain, and manned by a desperately

determined crew. Seeing what had happened, the commander of the *Tennessee* instantly tripped his anchors, and steamed at full speed into the midst of the Federal fleet, firing as he went, and with the great steel nose of his ship ramming every vessel that came in his way. Farragut's fleet in the meanwhile poured all the fire possible upon the ironclad monster to no effect, and many of them stove in their bows in a futile effort to sink her by collision. Then the monitors assailed her and so far crippled her, after a brief struggle, that she surrendered.

The story of this great battle at the mouth of Mobile Bay has been splendidly told in verse by Henry Howard Brownell in his poem entitled, "The Bay Fight." Mr. Brownell had written a poem called "The River Fight" in celebration of Farragut's struggle for the defenses of New Orleans two years before. Farragut had written to the poet, expressing his appreciation of his tribute, and at Brownell's request that he might accompany the great sea fighter in his next battle, Farragut had taken him with him on the *Hartford* as a witness to the struggle at the mouth of Mobile Bay.

The battle there had been a desperate one, costly in life and in ships, but it had accomplished its purpose. Farragut had passed the forts after crippling them so badly that they surrendered a few days later. He had destroyed the Confederate fleet and was now completely master of the entrance to a harbor which he had permanently sealed against the world. By reason of shoal water in the bay, he found it impossible to steam up to the city and take possession of it.

But at any rate he had destroyed it for all useful purposes as a Confederate port. Its capture from the land side was now certain, whenever any one of the Federal generals in the field should see fit to move against it in adequate force. In the meanwhile its nominal defense served henceforth only to occupy troops whose presence was badly needed by Lee in his great contest with Grant in Virginia.

CHAPTER LI

The Mine Explosion at Petersburg

General Grant was a man of skill and genius in the game of war. But until the summer of 1864 he had never played that game against another great master of it. He had baffled and beaten Albert Sydney Johnston, whose reputation as a commander of great skill rests rather upon the anticipation of his comrades in the old army at the outbreak of the war, than upon any demonstration of such skill made by himself. Grant had held his own and more against Beauregard in the tremendous second day's struggle at Shiloh. He had overcome great natural obstacles in his effort to take Vicksburg and he had received there the surrender of Pemberton,—a general who had never before commanded an army in the field, or in any other way manifested a capacity for command. Grant had also met Bragg at Chattanooga and beaten him. But none of these antagonists had been comparable with Lee as a great master of strategy and command.

When Grant found himself defeated at Cold Harbor, as he has himself described his situation, he had been baffled in both the purposes with which he had undertaken his campaign. He had not crushed Lee's army, nor had he succeeded in cutting it off from its base in the fortifications of Richmond. He had said

at Spottsylvania that he would "fight it out on this line if it takes all summer." The summer was still young when he found himself at Cold Harbor unable to do further fighting upon that line. He had crippled his enemy, it is true, but he had lost more than three men to that enemy's one, and that enemy still lay between him and Richmond in a mood of resoluteness and defiance. There was no way open to him by which, with any show of sanity, to assail Lee further in the field. It was then that he decided upon a campaign on other lines than those which he had chosen at the beginning of the summer.

He hoped by his movement upon Petersburg to take Lee at last by surprise, to cut his communications, and compel his precipitate retreat from the Confederate capital. Here again he was baffled of his purpose. There remained to him only the resource of dogged determination. He called for reinforcements in order that his army might always outnumber that of his adversary by two or three to one, and thus equipped with superior force, he determined, by continually extending his lines to the south and west, to draw Lee's slender line of defense into the condition of an attenuated thread.

Let us make this military situation clear to the minds of unmilitary readers. Grant lay east of Richmond and Petersburg, with a secure base of supplies at City Point on the James river, just in his rear. That base was perfectly protected by a great war fleet which lay in the river and held it. It was easily accessible from the North by transports of every kind, bringing troops or supplies of food or

ammunition. Grant's rear was as secure and as well furnished as if it had rested upon New York harbor.

He so disposed his men as to threaten Richmond and Petersburg over a space of about thirty miles. His battalions and his guns besieged the two cities all the way from a position north of Richmond, across James river and the Appomattox, to a point south and west of Petersburg. Good roads and a railroad in his rear lay beyond the possible sight of his enemy, and by the use of these he could concentrate any force he pleased at any point he might select upon Lee's attenuated lines,—all without Lee's knowledge, and beyond the possibility of his discovery.

From the beginning of these siege operations to the end General Grant's plan was not that which is here suggested, but another and slower one. It was his plan to continue the extension of his lines southward and westward toward the Weldon railroad, thus compelling his adversary to stretch out his lines and weaken his defenses at every point, and at the same time threatening his communications with the south. This cautious policy is explained and perhaps justified by the fact that in the preliminary operations against Petersburg, in which General Grant was baffled of his purpose to take that town with a rush, the Federals had lost no less than 10,000 men in a stubborn fight with Lee's small head of column. To assail Lee and such an army as that which Lee commanded behind entrenchments was a task so difficult and so perilous that it might well give pause to the most daring and most obstinate of generals.

No sooner was position taken up in front of Peters-

burg than Grant began his bold operations against the Weldon railroad leading thence southward. On the twenty-first and twenty-second of June Grant and Meade sent heavy forces southward and hurled them upon the Confederate defenses of that railroad. These forces were promptly met by the Confederates and disastrously defeated with a loss of 1,700 prisoners and four guns captured.

The failure of this enterprise ended operations in that quarter with such purpose for several weeks to come. Another plan was formed by which to break Confederate resistance. Immediately in front of Petersburg the two opposing lines of fortifications lay at one point within less than fifty yards of each other. Each line was strongly built and each was protected at every point by traverses,—earthworks built at right angles to the main works, as a protection against an enfilade or cross fire. So close were the works together, and so incessant was the fire that it became at last impossible for men on either side to show their heads above the works in order to discharge their guns. On either side port holes were made by the placing of sand bags on top of the parapets, in such fashion as to leave holes through which the men might fire their guns. Even these port holes were unavailable for use if by any chance the enemy looking toward them through a port hole on the other side could see the sky beyond. The moment a man undertook to shoot through the port hole his head, obscuring the light, revealed his presence there to some sharpshooter on the other side who was standing ready with gun aimed and "bead drawn" waiting to fire into the

hole the instant the sky beyond should be obscured by human presence. So ceaseless was the fire at this point that repeated experiments showed that any twig thrust above the crest of the parapet would be instantly cut in two by one of the multitudinous bullets which were flowing in a continuous stream from one side to the other.

The space between the works was so perfectly and completely commanded by Confederate artillery that no general in his senses would have thought of attempting to cross it, even with the most heroic of veterans. But just in rear of the Federal lines there was a cavernous hollow between the hills, where anything might be done without the possibility of Confederate discovery. A regiment composed mainly of Pennsylvania coal miners was brought to that point, and instructed to push a mining shaft under the hill in order to plant a great mine immediately beneath the Confederate works.

The tunnel began in the ravine in rear of the Federal works, and extended thence 500 feet. This brought it immediately under an important redan in the Confederate lines. There a cross gallery eighty feet long was dug, and packed full of gunpowder,—8,000 pounds in all.

The plan was to surprise the Confederates and break their lines by the explosion of this tremendous mine on the morning of the thirtieth of July. It was intended to take advantage of the confusion thus created, and push a strong column through the gap made in the works, thus cutting Lee's army in two, and compelling it to retreat.

The affair was badly managed from beginning to end, and resulted in a disaster which amounted almost to a crime. For the execution of such an enterprise as this, General Meade ought to have selected his most daring and determined subordinate to lead the assailing force. Instead of that he permitted the selection to be made by some species of lot drawing, and the choice fell upon General James H. Ledlie, who proved himself peculiarly unfit for the conduct of an enterprise that required so much of heroic daring. General Grant in his "Memoirs" says of this officer that, "Ledlie, besides being otherwise inefficient, proved also to possess a disqualification less common among soldiers." He did, indeed, order his men to advance into the breach made by the explosion which occurred at about daylight, but he did not lead them. He remained instead, during all that terrible day, securely ensconced in the ravine that lay in rear of the Federal line.

The explosion completely destroyed a Confederate fort and its garrison, leaving a vast crater thirty feet deep and two hundred feet long into which Ledlie's men were sent like sheep to the slaughter. Having reached the crater they stopped there instead of pushing on as had been intended and running over the weak second line of Confederate defense. Thus the whole purpose of the enterprise was completely defeated at the outset for lack of capable leadership.

It must be remembered that at that period of the war Lee's army was so far battle seasoned that any form of panic was to it completely impossible. Even when it saw the most important part of its line blown

up, and thousands of Federal troops rushing into the crater, the Army of Northern Virginia remained steadfast and unshaken. Hurried orders were given, and promptly obeyed. Within ten minutes after Ledlie's column came to a halt in the crater it was forever too late for them to gain the advantage intended by rushing through that slender second line which held the Jerusalem plank road, and which alone stood then between the Federal army and Petersburg. Under Lee's command, the Army of Northern Virginia had become as perfect a piece of military mechanism as ever existed, and under Lee's command, for both Lee and Beauregard were promptly present at the post of danger, the men of that army were quickly shifted into positions against which an advance of their enemy would have been nothing less than wholesale suicide.

In the meanwhile Ledlie's men in the crater were as helpless to retire as they were to advance. They were practically leaderless and the space in rear of them was already commanded by Confederate artillery which could sweep it with canister from end to end. To this commanding force of artillery Lee promptly added thirty-five other guns, placing each in a position from which it could hurl its missiles from one end to the other of the doomed space.

It was not until after midday that these preparations and others of a like kind were completed. But in the meanwhile detachments from Lamkin's battery of mortars were pushed up and placed behind traverses within sixty yards of that cavernous hole in which thousands of Federal soldiers were lying helpless for lack of a leader fit to command them. These

mortars continued ceaselessly throughout the morning to hurl twenty-four-pound shells into the hole at the rate of twenty a minute. This fire was murderous in an extreme degree, but there was no escape from it. The men subjected to it had no choice but to sit still and await the end. They could neither advance nor retreat with any hope of escape in either direction.

Finally a little after midday, and after he had completed his preparations and the placing of his guns, Lee ordered Mahone, with a heavy infantry force, to charge across the field to the very edge of the crater, and pour into it a fire so destructive that its further tenancy should be rendered impossible. The more desperate of the Federal troops in the hole risked flight toward their own lines, fifty yards away. Not many of them succeeded in getting there. The rest surrendered, and the Confederates occupied the crater.

The narrow space between the two lines was literally piled high with dead Federal soldiers, lying on top of each other, sometimes three deep, and in some places five. A day later there was a suspension of hostilities for a few hours, and the dead were dragged away and buried.

This badly managed affair well nigh rivaled the blunder at Cold Harbor in its costliness to the Army of the Potomac. Grant's loss was more than 4,000 men,—Lee's less than 1,000.

The whole enterprise was of doubtful military propriety. Yet if it had been conducted with an energy and capability equal to that which had been brought to bear upon other fields it might have promised the

early and complete destruction of Lee's defenses. If there had been, in command of the troops set apart for the assault, such a man as Sheridan, for example, or Hooker, or Hancock, the chance was an even one or better that the force hurled suddenly upon Lee's broken line could have made its way into Petersburg by impetuous advance. It must be accounted one of General Meade's rare failures in judgment, that he did not place the assailing force under some such commander upon whom he could depend to give wise personal direction and leadership to the desperate fighting needed on such an occasion.

In its outcome, this enterprise which had been planned for the destruction of Lee and his army, resulted rather in their strengthening. Having recaptured the crater they promptly threw up a line of works along that side of it which lay nearest to their enemy, thus in fact, shortening the distance between the two lines, without in any way weakening their position.

An unfortunate circumstance connected with this affair was the fact that General Burnside, who had general command in that part of the field, made a desperate endeavor—which came a few minutes too late—to force the Confederate second line by an advance of the negro troops under his command. These pushed themselves as far forward up the hill as they could go and were there hurled back and driven into the great pit. In the event many of them were captured. The Confederates refused to recognize these black men as soldiers or to treat them as prisoners of war. It was a time, indeed, when the Southern sol-

diers were in a state of peculiar exasperation and revengefulness against negroes in arms. During a recent raid certain negro troops had committed unforgiveable outrages upon women, and in consequence the mood of mind of the Army of Northern Virginia was such that a negro soldier in arms had better have fallen into hell than into their hands. General Lee and his subordinates did what they could to compel a merciful treatment for the negro troops who were captured in the crater. It was all to no purpose. Every effort made to send these men to the rear as prisoners under charge of details ended in a report from the commander of the detail that the negroes had "escaped." Their escape was of such kind that burial parties had to be sent into the covered ways leading to Petersburg to clear them of the negro corpses there.

General Grant has said of this mine enterprise: "The effort was a stupendous failure. It cost us about 4,000 men, mostly however, captured; and all due to inefficiency on the part of the corps commander (Burnside) and the incompetency of the division commander (Ledlie) who were sent to lead the assault."

CHAPTER LII

Early's Invasion of Pennsylvania

It will be remembered that General Grant set out upon his Virginia campaign of 1864 with the definite and avowed purpose of crushing and destroying Lee in the field. The completeness of his failure to accomplish this purpose was made manifest in July, when Lee, confronting the consolidated armies of the Potomac and the James, nevertheless felt himself strong enough to detach from his own force a vigorous body of troops under Early, with instructions to sweep Hunter out of the Valley of Virginia and undertake a third invasion of Maryland, so conducted as to threaten Baltimore and Washington.

This movement was a peculiarly daring one, but the strategy of it was brilliant. The detachment of the troops sent to Early seriously weakened the force that Lee had under his command for the defense of the Confederate capital, but he hoped for such results from Early's movement as should again compel the Federal Government to weaken or withdraw Grant's army from the siege of Petersburg. He had twice before succeeded by such tactics in compelling the Army of the Potomac to withdraw from Virginia and stand upon its defense at the North. In both instances as soon as that army had withdrawn Lee himself had moved with all his force to the support

of the invading column. There is little doubt that he intended to repeat this operation if Early's threat to Washington should prove effective in compelling Grant's withdrawal from Virginia. But by this time volunteering by hundreds of thousands and drafts, some of which brought as many as half a million men into the field, had so enormously increased the Federal numbers that Grant was strongly disposed to leave the defense of Washington to quite other troops than those he had with him in his operations at Petersburg. The disparity of numbers between the two armies had now become too great to be offset by brilliant strategy, or by any energy in daring enterprise.

Hunter had so far carried out Grant's plan of ravaging the Valley of Virginia and moving upon the Confederate lines of communication at Lynchburg, as to create in Lee's mind a serious apprehension. Partly to meet this danger, and partly with a larger strategic purpose, Lee detached Early, and sent him down the Valley with about 8,000 men. Slipping into the upper or southern end of the valley without discovery, Early plunged forward impetuously, and so completely broke Hunter's resistance that that general, instead of retiring before his enemy toward the Potomac, abandoned the field completely, and took refuge in West Virginia, thus leaving Early's pathway to the region beyond the Potomac open and unobstructed. Early was an officer of extraordinary vigor and promptitude. He quickly crossed the Potomac and pushed on to Monocacy near the city of Frederick. There he was met by a force under Gen-

eral Lew Wallace on the ninth of July. Hurling his army upon Wallace he quickly swept him from the field. He then pushed forward until, on the eleventh of July, he came within sight of Washington City itself, and for a time it was gravely feared there that he would enter and possess the Federal capital.

Grant had known nothing of Early's detachment from Lee's army until the news came to him that the Confederates were marching upon Washington in threatening force. As has been said before, it was Grant's conviction that Washington ought to be able to take care of itself so long as the main body of the Army of Northern Virginia was kept busy in his own front at Richmond and Petersburg. Nevertheless, as soon as news came to him that Early had defeated Hunter and driven him out of the valley, and that the Confederates were rapidly advancing upon Washington, Grant detached a strong force, and hurried it to the capital city. In the meanwhile the authorities at Washington seem to have been thrown into a panic as dangerous as it was senseless. They did, indeed, take certain measures of defense. They put arms in the hands of the clerks in the several departments, and sought with these to make some show of opposition to the approach of the Confederate veterans. This was manifestly useless. The time had long gone by when untrained clerks, however well armed, could be expected to stand for one moment against the battle-hardened veterans who had learned their trade under Lee or Grant in the desperate struggles in Virginia. It is not an exaggeration but simple truth to say that at that time a single regiment from

either the Army of Northern Virginia or the Army of the Potomac could easily and almost without effort have swept away a hundred thousand untrained militiamen, however patriotic they may have been, and however they may have been inspired with personal courage. To send a mob of department clerks, however numerous, against such a force as that which Early commanded was like sending sheep to a contest with wolves. It meant the butchery of the poor fellows, without the smallest hope that their sacrifice of life could yield anything of advantage to the Federal cause or could delay the Confederate progress by more than a few minutes at the most. But Grant had promptly met the danger by hurrying two corps of his veterans to Washington city. Fortunately for the Federal cause, this force got there in time to interpose itself effectively between Early and the capital.

After burning the city of Chambersburg Early was compelled to retire, which he did at once without loss, taking up a strong position in the Valley of Virginia, where his presence as a continual threat to Washington city was more effective than his coöperation with Lee at Petersburg could have been.

Posted in the valley, Early's little force of 8,000 men served to occupy twice or thrice that number of Grant's troops in the defense of Washington, and in preparation for repelling an apprehended invasion of the country north of that city.

This Monocacy campaign, as it is called in history, involved no great battle, but as a strategic influence it was an achievement of the utmost importance to General Lee. Before that campaign was begun

Hunter's presence in the Valley and his mastery there served not only to cut off from Lee the rich supplies which it was his custom to draw from that quarter of the country, but also to threaten him dangerously in the rear. If Hunter had been let alone, he must presently have forced his way to Lynchburg, cutting Lee's chief line of communication with the south and west, and opening the way to a junction between his own force and the forces which were pushing forward by Grant's order from Tennessee toward that point. By the detachment of Early with 8,000 men Lee had succeeded in preventing all this; in driving Hunter beyond the mountains into West Virginia, where his force could render no assistance whatever to Grant's campaign; in clearing the valley of all Federal forces; and in compelling Grant to keep at Washington a strong force which he might otherwise have utilized in his operations at Petersburg.

For several months after the Monocacy campaign this continued to be the situation. It grew at last so intolerable to Grant that he sent Sheridan to the Valley to drive Early out, and possess that fair region. In the meanwhile the results of Early's brilliant campaign with a handful of men, and his still more important success in holding the Valley of Virginia with that same handful of men, had its influence upon operations at the principal seat of hostilities.

CHAPTER LIII

Operations at Petersburg and Sheridan's Valley Campaign

In the mine operation General Grant had been baffled even more conspicuously than at the Wilderness or at Spottsylvania or at Cold Harbor. All his efforts to break through Lee's lines had completely failed. All his efforts to crush Lee and destroy his resisting power had come to naught. There remained to him—notwithstanding his enormous superiority of force and of the materials of war—only the resource of continuing the regular siege operations already in progress.

For such operations he was peculiarly well equipped. He had more men than his adversary had by three or four to one. He had an unassailable base of supplies upon the James river to which his vessels could come without the slightest fear of molestation. He had unlimited supplies while his adversary hung all the time upon the verge of starvation. He had a railroad in his rear over which he could move trains at will without even the possibility of his adversary's discovery. He had already by the extension of his lines compelled Lee to draw his out to the point of breaking. Grant could, at any moment, concentrate a hundred thousand men and a hundred guns upon any point in Lee's line which he might select for

assault, and that without the smallest possibility of Lee's discovering his purpose. But instead of assault, which he had many times attempted with disastrous results, General Grant wisely determined to continue his policy of attenuating Lee's lines by enforced extension. He continued to move his own troops southward and westward toward and along the Weldon railroad, thus compelling Lee to stretch out his lines until the men in his breastworks, instead of standing elbow to elbow, stood many feet apart, and held their ground only by virtue of a desperate determination.

On the thirteenth of August Grant sent Hancock to assail the defenses of Richmond on the northern side of the James river. Lee was prompt to meet him, and the Confederates succeeded in repelling every attack made throughout a succession of bloody days. But while these operations were going on north of the James, Grant availed himself of his superior numbers by sending Warren on the eighteenth to seize upon the Weldon railroad south of Petersburg, and entrench himself in a line crossing that avenue of Confederate communication. On the nineteenth of August and again on the twenty-first, Lee desperately assailed Warren in this position, but without success. On the twenty-fifth a Confederate force under General A. P. Hill was sent forward to recapture the position. The Confederates made three desperate assaults, but in each case were beaten back with terrific loss. Finally, Hill ordered Heth's division to move forward and carry the works at all hazards and all costs. That was an order which the

veterans in these two contending armies understood, and were accustomed to obey. Ordered to carry the works, Heth did so, capturing three batteries and a large number of prisoners. Then the Federals, under General Miles, rallied and made a counter assault, recapturing a part of the works, but suffering terribly in the encounter. In this fierce struggle the Federals lost 2,400 men. The Confederate loss has never been accurately reported, but in such desperate fighting as was done on that field, it must have been severe.

The total result of this struggle was that Grant held and continued thereafter to hold a part of the railroad which led south from Petersburg, by way of Weldon, and upon which Lee was compelled to depend in a considerable degree for communication and supplies. But with that vigor and resourcefulness which had come to mark the operations of the armies on both sides, Lee promptly opened a wagon route thirty miles long and well defended, over which as a bridge to the gap he was able for months afterwards to carry all supplies and reinforcements that could be brought to him from the south.

In the meanwhile there was continuous battling all along the Richmond and Petersburg lines, which covered a space of more than thirty miles. The sharpshooting was incessant, the bombardment scarcely less so. But Grant was not yet ready to make another determined assault upon Lee's works, or in any other way to bring on a battle in earnest.

The defeat and driving away of Hunter from the Valley was a painful miscarriage of the plans with

which the lieutenant general had hoped to conduct the campaign. So long as Early should remain in the Valley it was obvious that continual raids upon Washington were not only possible but probable, and that these raids or even the possibility of them must seriously impair Grant's strength at Petersburg. Accordingly, Grant decided that his first care now must be to regain possession of the valley of Virginia, and to hold that region irresistibly against Confederate invasion. To accomplish this he sent for General Sheridan and placed under his command a force of 30,000 men, or nearly four times as many as those with which Early could oppose him. With a force so overwhelming, Sheridan was ordered completely to clear the valley of Confederate troops, to cut off all supplies that might come from that fertile region for the support of Lee's army, and permanently to render that pathway toward the north a no-thoroughfare to the Confederates.

Grant's purpose looked to a campaign of utter and complete destruction. In his orders to Sheridan he said, "In pushing up the Shenandoah Valley, where it is expected you will have to go first or last, it is desirable that nothing should be left to invite the enemy to return. Take all provisions, forage and stock wanted for the use of your command. Such as cannot be consumed destroy. It is not desirable that the buildings should be destroyed—they should rather be protected; but the people should be informed that so long as an army can subsist among them recurrences of these raids must be expected; and we are determined to stop them at all hazards."

Up to this time General Halleck, who was acting as adjutant general, though no longer in command, had continued in annoying ways to interfere with Grant's orders and proceedings. A dispatch from Mr. Lincoln warned Grant that certain of his orders would not be carried out unless he, Grant, should personally see to their execution. This gave Grant his opportunity, once for all, to teach Halleck the bitter lesson that it was now the Galena clerk who had the right to command. Grant went to Washington and so far asserted himself that Halleck sent him a message of complete submission, and thereafter executed the orders of the commanding general, instead of criticizing them and interfering with them.

Grant's instructions to Sheridan were to put himself south of the Confederates, and to follow them to the death wherever they might go. Having 30,000 men with whom to chase 8,000 Sheridan's task in the execution of this order was not a difficult one.

Early lay at this time just south of the Potomac, a little way above Harper's Ferry, and was drawing his supplies from Maryland by cavalry operations in that quarter. Sheridan promptly pushed southward toward Winchester and Early retired to that point to await reinforcements from Lee. Early retreated as far as Fisher's Hill, east of Winchester, and there took up a strong position, offering battle to his adversary while waiting to be reinforced. There Sheridan attacked Early on the twenty-first of August and was beaten off by the Confederates with a loss of two or three hundred men. Sheridan thereupon retired to Hall Town, destroying as he went "everything eatable."

Then occurred one of the odd situations of the war. For three or four weeks, Early with less than 8,000 men was practically besieging Sheridan with more than 30,000, and in the meantime keeping Washington in a condition of chronic fright by threatening raids into Maryland, West Virginia and Pennsylvania, by breaking up the Baltimore and Ohio railroad and the Chesapeake and Ohio canal, and in other ways behaving himself precisely as he might have done had his force been four times that of Sheridan's, instead of being, as it was in fact, one fourth as great.

Why Sheridan with his enormously superior force did not at this time fall upon Early and crush him must always be a puzzling question to the historian and the military critic. Whatever the explanation may be, the fact is that during all these weeks Sheridan was standing at bay in the hope that Grant's operations before Petersburg might compel Lee to withdraw Early and his small force from the Valley. So far from driving Early out of that region Sheridan stood upon the defensive in order that Early might not drive him out instead.

At last Lee recalled to Petersburg the troops he had sent to Early's reinforcement, and about the same time Early divided his forces, sending a large part of them to Martinsburg, twenty miles or so north of Winchester. Here was a great opportunity and Grant promptly ordered Sheridan to take advantage of it. On the nineteenth of September Sheridan advanced with all his force upon Winchester, which place Early was defending east of the town. Prompt-

ly discovering the purpose of Sheridan's movement, Early recalled his troops from Martinsburg, and concentrated all the force he had in front of Winchester. A fierce and desperate battle ensued in which the Federal loss was about 5,000 men, and the Confederate loss about 4,000. In the end the enormous superiority of numbers on the Federal side prevailed, and Early was driven into retreat up the Valley. But the retreat was made in good order, and all the trains were saved.

Early retired again to Fisher's Hill, where the Valley is about four miles in width, and there took up a strong position for resistance. There on the twenty-second of September Sheridan again assailed him in overwhelming force, and after a stubborn fight drove him again into retreat up the Valley, but failed in a deliberately formed plan for capturing the meager Confederate force. During the next three or four days Early continued his retreat until he reached Port Republic, and the fighting, though irregular, was continuous.

Grant had hoped that Sheridan would make his way as far south as Charlottesville, but in that he was disappointed. Finding it impossible to force his way further, Sheridan began a retrograde march northward down the Valley on the fifth of October. He destroyed as he went everything that might by any possibility have value to his enemy. In his report he said, "I have destroyed over 2,000 barns, filled with wheat, hay and farming implements; over 70 mills filled with flour and wheat; have driven in front of the army over 4,000 head of stock, and have killed

and issued to the troops not less than 3,000 sheep." After this march was over Sheridan picturesquely suggested the desolation he had wrought in one of the fairest of all God's countries by saying that "The crow that flies over the Valley of Virginia must henceforth carry his rations with him."

Here we have a suggestion of the barbarity and brutality and desolation of war! With their barns burned, their wheat and their corn and their flour destroyed, and their stock carried off by the enemy, the farmers of that rich valley were left by the decree of war to stare starvation in the face, and to suffer an extreme of poverty more severe even than that which wastefulness and debauchery bring to men. With jaunty indifference to human suffering war decrees starvation to women and children, the ruin of men's fortunes, the destruction of their means of subsistence, and their sudden reduction from affluence to poverty. In this particular case, in order that no Confederate army might thereafter secure supplies upon which to subsist in the Valley of Virginia, Sheridan decreed that all these farmer folk should be completely deprived of their substance, that their barns should be burned, their cattle slaughtered, their sheep driven off, their wheat stacks reduced to ashes, their smokehouses stripped of the last flitch of bacon that might be hanging there—in brief, that these people, men, women and children, should be deprived of all food supplies and left to starve in wretchedness for the sake of accomplishing a military purpose. How long, oh, Lord, how long will it be before the world shall advance to that point in civilization in which war

will be justly regarded as the infamous crime that it is? How long will it be before civilization shall cease to be a mere veneer or varnish and become a matter of substance in human affairs?

As Sheridan retired northward down the Valley, Early received some meager reinforcements, and with that energy which characterized all his operations, he instantly set out in pursuit of his adversary.

Sheridan had taken a position at Cedar Creek, a little to the north of Strasburg, and there on the night of the eighteenth, Early, with every precaution of silence, moved around the Federal left, and at dawn of the nineteenth fell upon the Federal forces with all the vigor he could command. The rout of the Federals was quick and complete. Sheridan was absent at the time, and on his return he met his army in full flight. He instantly set cavalry to work against his own men, in order to stop the insensate retreat. Thus rallying his men he turned them back, entrenched them hastily, and repulsed Early's assault. Later in the day he took the offensive, and succeeded in breaking the Confederate line, and driving it into retreat, capturing 34 Confederate guns in the operation. On the Confederate side 3,100 men fell in this contest. On the Federal side the loss amounted to 5,764.

The result of these operations was to give Sheridan complete command of the Valley of the Shenandoah for the time being, at least, and to wipe that danger spot off the map.

CHAPTER LIV

The Presidential Campaign of 1864

At this time there was a presidential campaign in progress at the North. Throughout the war, the South had the advantage of a practically united people, while at the North there was division of sentiment, and a violent difference of opinion as to policy. At the North there was a political party bitterly opposing the administration which must carry on the war, and even opposing the war itself, as unconstitutional in its inception, blundering in its management and completely barren of results.

Here was a fire in the rear with which Mr. Lincoln's administration was forced to reckon, and the reckoning was a very serious one.

In 1864 the Democratic party at the North set itself resolutely against the Lincoln administration, and in opposition to all of its plans, to all of its policies and to all of its performances. In a national political platform, the Democratic party declared that the war was a failure, and in effect called for the abandonment of the Federal cause. For president that party nominated General George B. McClellan, a popular hero in the minds of many men, who was held by them as he held himself, to have been baffled in his military enterprises and robbed of his opportunities by the political antagonism of the Washing-

ton administration, and by the prejudice that existed in Congress against him as a Democrat.

Grant's failure to crush Lee in the field or so far to occupy him at Petersburg, as to prevent him from sending Early to threaten Washington, had proved to be a very great discouragement to the Northern people. The cost of the war in men, material and money had been enormous, and there was a widespread sentiment in the North to the effect that it was hopeless to continue the contest. The political feeling of Democrats in antagonism to the Republican party which was represented by the administration was intense and implacable.

There was also a party at the North which opposed Lincoln's reëlection upon quite other grounds than those on which the Democrats antagonized him. This party was radical in the extreme. In its convention, which was held at Cleveland, Ohio, at the end of May, it declared itself in favor of an anti-slavery amendment to the Constitution of the United States, and even urged that the lands of the Southerners should be confiscated and divided among the soldiers who were fighting the war. On a platform of this kind General John C. Fremont, who had resigned from the army because of what he regarded as ill treatment at the hand of the administration, was nominated for President. There was not the smallest chance, of course, that Fremont could be elected upon a platform such as this, but his candidacy seemed likely to withdraw from Lincoln a considerable vote, which would otherwise be his.

The Republican Convention met in Baltimore on

the seventh of June and renominated Mr. Lincoln for President on a platform strongly approving his conduct of the war and reaffirming the views that he had expressed from time to time concerning it. At the same time Andrew Johnson, of Tennessee, was nominated for Vice-President. Johnson was a Southerner and was at that time acting as military governor of Tennessee. He had always been a Democrat, but he had strongly favored the prosecution of the war for the Union, and at that critical time when Mr. Lincoln's reëlection seemed more than doubtful, it was deemed politic thus to put a war Democrat on the ticket with him, by way of holding to his support that large body of Democratic voters who favored the vigorous prosecution of the contest.

Although Johnson was himself a Southerner, it would have been difficult to find any man more antagonistic than he was to the ruling class of men at the South. He had been born a "poor white,"—that is to say, a member of that class at the South which was everywhere held in contempt both by negroes and by white men. He had received no education in his childhood, and it is said, could neither read nor write until after his marriage, when his wife taught him. But he was a man of very considerable intellectual ability, and by diligent work he had come into prominence as a lawyer, before Mr. Lincoln selected him to exercise the functions of military governor over the practically recovered state of Tennessee. As every reader knows, this selection of Johnson for Vice-President proved in the end to be a thorn in the flesh to the Republican party. Their Democratic Vice-

President was destined to succeed to the Presidency by Mr. Lincoln's assassination, almost at the beginning of his second term, and as President to do all that he could to thwart and baffle the policies of the party that had elected him.

When the Democratic Convention met in Chicago on the twenty-ninth of August, the situation in the field was such as greatly to discourage a large part of the population at the North. The demands of the Lincoln administration for more and more troops had been incessant and insistent. These demands had exhausted the willingness of the people to respond, and the administration had been compelled to resort to a forcible draft as a means of keeping up the armies in the field. This resort to the policy of enforced enlistment was everywhere bitterly resented. It was held to be un-American, un-Republican, despotic.

There was also the fact that Grant's great campaign from which so much had been expected seemed to a large part of the people to have been a failure. Grant had not crushed Lee, but on the contrary, Lee was so strong that he had pushed a column under Early up to the very gates of Washington. At the end of August Sherman had not yet succeeded in taking Atlanta, but had suffered some severe reverses in his effort to accomplish that object. At that time also, critical discontent at the North was encouraged by the spectacle of Sheridan standing on the defensive in the Valley of Virginia against a force scarcely more than one fourth as great as his own. There was despair in many minds, and weariness in many more.

The resources of the country had been strained well nigh to the point of breaking. Taxes of every kind had been multiplied almost to the limit of ingenuity. The credit of the country was so far impaired that its paper currency had become depreciated to less than one half its nominal value. The debt of the nation had been swelled to thousands of millions, while its productive capacity was being more and more impaired by the withdrawal of young men by hundreds of thousands from their farms and their workshops. The country had given to Mr. Lincoln soldiers by millions, and dollars by billions, and yet the war went on with no apparent prospect of being early brought to a successful end.

For to people uninstructed in military affairs, there was little in the situation in the field at the end of August, 1864, to encourage the hope of a speedy ending of the struggle. The people generally did not realize the great gain that had been made by Grant's insistent pounding of the Confederates, nor did they understand how surely his policy was weakening and destroying the capacity of resistance on the part of the South. Under these circumstances, there was widespread discontent with the administration and disgust over its seeming failure to accomplish the purpose aimed at in the lavish expenditure of money, and the enormous sacrifice of human life. A feeling of despair had come over a very great part of the Northern people, and to this feeling the Democratic party in its platform made a strongly persuasive appeal.

Among other things, the platform said, "that this

Convention does explicitly declare, as the sense of the American people, that after four years of failure to restore the Union by the experiment of war, during which under the pretense of military necessity, of a war power higher than the Constitution, the Constitution itself has been disregarded in every part, and public liberty and private right alike trodden down, and the material prosperity of the country essentially impaired—justice, humanity, liberty and the public welfare demand that immediate efforts be made for a cessation of hostilities with a view to an ultimate Convention of all the States, or other peaceable means, to the end that, at the earliest practicable moment, peace may be restored on the basis of the Federal union of the States.

"That the aim and object of the Democratic party is to preserve the Federal union, and the rights of the states unimpaired."

It is obvious enough to us now that the election of McClellan upon that platform would have meant the surrender by the United States of every contention on which the war had been prosecuted. It would have been, in effect, the triumph of the Confederacy. In any convention that might have been called to reconstruct the Union under such conditions, the South as the winning party in the war, would of course have dictated its own terms.

For a time there seemed to be a very strong prospect that precisely this would happen. The weariness of the people with the war, the discontent aroused by excessive taxation, and by the continued slaughter of the youth of the land, the despair of bankers and

business men over the never ceasing depreciation of the currency,—all these and other influences tended very strongly to invite a favorable response from the people to this appeal of a political party.

It was the opinion of many shrewd observers of that time, and is the opinion to-day of many students of history who have closely considered the facts, that if the election had occurred at the beginning of September, 1864, there would have been a decisive majority of voters in favor of this policy of surrender. But the election did not occur until November, and in the meanwhile the military situation was vastly changed. Sherman had taken Atlanta before November came, the Confederate army under Hood had been put in the way of being crushed in Tennessee, Sheridan had made himself master of the Valley of Virginia, and Grant was steadily extending his lines southward and westward at Petersburg, in a way which even the unmilitary observer must recognize at last as a process foredooming Lee to destruction.

Under the influence of these changed conditions in the field, Mr. Lincoln was reëlected with a popular majority of about 400,000 and an electoral majority of 212 to 21. There was contention at the time that the votes of the soldiers in the field were juggled with and falsified. It is highly improbable that anything of that kind was done or attempted in any considerable measure. It is certain that the election, as it resulted, represented the determination of the North to prosecute the war to its end.

CHAPTER LV

Sherman at Atlanta

Sherman occupied Atlanta on the second day of September, 1864, the Confederates retiring without a further struggle to a strong position east of the city.

Sherman almost immediately decided to depopulate the town and make of it a rigidly military stronghold. To that end he ordered all the inhabitants, old and young, sick and well, men, women and children alike, to leave the place. He gave to each the choice of fleeing northward or southward as each might elect, but all must go. All these helpless non-combatants must abandon their homes, surrender whatever they possessed of bread-winning employments and go forth among strangers helpless and forlorn objects of charity.

Even that "hellishness" which Sherman attributed to war, could scarcely have given birth to a crueller order than this. Sherman always justified it in apparent apology to his own conscience, upon the ground that his army was placed in a perilous position in the heart of an enemy's country with a long and exceedingly vulnerable line of communication by one single-track railroad, and that the presence of non-combatants in Atlanta, most of them hostile to his purposes, must be an additional source of danger.

The necessities of war have always been held to justify or at least excuse many things that would otherwise be deemed barbaric and even savage in their cruel inhumanity. That plea of military necessity rests upon the assumption that the purposes of war are of so supreme moment, and in themselves so clearly righteous, that they should be prosecuted to success regardless of human suffering and regardless of all other considerations; that they should be insisted upon in utter disregard of the suffering even of those non-combatant women and children upon whom such war-decrees as this fall with an excess of cruelty.

In every such case as this, the commander who issues the decree is himself sole and arbitrary judge of the extent of his necessity. What if he judges wrongly? What if he permits considerations of his own convenience to outweigh all other arguments, and, for the sake of his own repose in his headquarters wantonly condemns many innocent, helpless, and in no way offensive, women and little children and men sorely stricken with age, to a banishment which must mean to many of them a long period of suffering with lingering and painful death by the wayside as an incident? What if he is moved to the issue of such an order merely by way of saving himself and his army from the trouble of effectually guarding a position which due diligence might sufficiently protect?

At the beginning of the war and indeed throughout its progress, Washington City had multitudes of people in it whose sympathies were with the South-

ern cause, and who daily communicated by one means or another with the Confederates in Virginia. Would McClellan have been justified by the facts, in ordering the utter depopulation of the Federal city, and the sending into exile of every man, woman and child dwelling there and not enlisted in the military service? Did any commander on either side ever think of depopulating Harper's Ferry or Winchester or Martinsburg, although throughout the struggle those points of strategic importance were inhabited about equally by Northern and Southern sympathizers.

It is true that at Atlanta General Sherman was in a position of considerable danger and difficulty. But he had deliberately placed himself in that position, for the sake of the military advantages it might yield to him; and moreover, he had almost phenomenally overwhelming resources in men, money, food stuffs, and all the other appliances of war, with which to maintain himself there, in spite of anything and everything that the non-combatants of the town could have done to annoy him. Impartial history must therefore earnestly challenge his order for the depopulation of Atlanta, asking whether its cruelty was really a military necessity or whether it was merely a resort of convenience, intended to save an invading army and its commander from petty annoyance. Did not General Sherman by this order of depopulation needlessly add to the suffering of non-combatants? Was his military necessity at that time so great—when he had only a badly crippled army to contend against, and when he had three or four men to its one—was his military extremity so great, history will ask, as to justify this enormous cruelty?

General Sherman always contended that it was. In his correspondence with Hood at the time, in his letters of explanation to Halleck and Grant, and finally in his "Memoirs" published years afterwards, he defended his action vigorously and even angrily, as a military necessity, but always in such fashion as to suggest that he felt it necessary to defend himself and his fame, in the forum of civilization, and to make out a sufficient case of military necessity to excuse that which he felt that humanity shrank from as a cruel and barbaric expedient.

These questions belong to biography and the literature of personal controversy. It is the function of history merely to record the facts. The facts in this case are that Sherman depopulated Atlanta, sending its helpless people into exile, and ruthlessly destroying the greater part of their homes in order, as he himself explained, to contract his lines of defense, reduce the city and all its suburbs to the dimensions of a military post easily held, and spare himself the necessity of maintaining a multitude of provost guards and detailing large bodies of troops to hold a populated place, where very small bodies might hold one depopulated.

It is certain that enormous human suffering resulted from his decree. It is certain that women and children and aged persons perished because of it. Whether it was really a measure of military necessity, or only a measure prompted by ill temper, or a measure intended to save trouble to an invading army, each reader must judge for himself. In judging, the reader should remember that no such thing was done

at Memphis or Nashville or Chattanooga; that Grant adopted no such measure after he conquered Vicksburg; that even Benjamin F. Butler, whose disposition it always was to employ all the technicalities of the law in defense of arbitrary measures against his enemies, never for one moment thought of depopulating New Orleans during his occupancy of that city. The depopulation of Atlanta by the fiat of a military commander stands out in relief as the only occurrence of the kind that marked or marred the conduct of the war on either side. It must be judged upon its own merits without parallel or precedent to guide the mind that inquires concerning its humanity or its inhumanity.

In securing possession of Atlanta Sherman had fully accomplished one of the supreme purposes of the campaign which Grant had marked out as the objects of all the operations of all the armies during the summer of 1864. He had indeed accomplished quite all that Grant had set him to accomplish during that season. His success had been completer than Grant's own in fact, for he had overcome the Confederate army in his front and, after a series of hotly contested battles and a brilliant display of grand strategy on both sides, he had completely achieved the objective of the campaign marked out for him. Hood's further resistance was both problematical and well nigh hopeless in view of the enormous disparity of numbers between the two armies. On the other hand Grant had failed in his twin purposes of crushing the Army of Northern Virginia in the field, and making himself master of the Confederate capital city.

In his dispatches to Sherman at the time, Grant fully and generously recognized all this, taking pains even to emphasize the fact that his great lieutenant's success had been completer than his own.

But when he had settled himself in Atlanta, depopulated the town and sent its helpless people into exile, Sherman found himself in a sore predicament. His sole base of supplies was at Chattanooga—a hundred miles away—and his only line of communication with that base was a single track railroad running through a hostile country and subject to interruption at any hour. His enemy occupied a position near Atlanta from which he could not be dislodged without fearful slaughter, and the enterprise of that enemy in attacks upon the Federal line of communications was hourly made evident. Sherman's problem of future operations was an exceedingly perplexing one. But whatever its decision might ultimately be, he prepared himself for it by bringing forward great quantities of provisions and ammunition and strengthening his rear in every possible way. At every station on the line of railroad between Atlanta and Chattanooga, he placed small bodies of men, entrenching them to resist cavalry. At important points he built strong blockhouses for further defense.

More important still, in anticipation of a northward advance of the Confederates, he asked for and secured strong reinforcements for Thomas, whom he had stationed at Nashville, with command of all the strategic points in Tennessee and Northern Georgia.

In the meanwhile Sherman himself was watching

Hood, and meditating upon the question of what further movements he might undertake with his army at Atlanta, now that he had effectually secured Nashville, Chattanooga and the other strategic points north of his position.

He was also busily engaged in diplomacy. At that time there was widespread discontent at the South with the conduct of the war and not a little despair. To many minds, including those of a number of influential statesmen, the conviction had come that all hope of the ultimate success of the Confederate cause had passed away, and that it was high time to give up the effort and make peace while yet the South's resisting power was great enough to serve as an argument in behalf of favorable terms.

In North Carolina this sentiment took form in the open candidacy of Mr. Holden for the governorship on a platform which advocated the secession of that state from the Confederacy, and the conclusion of peace between the United States and North Carolina as an independent sovereignty entirely free to return at will to the Union.

This was logical enough, but it was of course impracticable. The foundation stone of the Confederacy was the contention that each state was independently sovereign and could withdraw at its own good pleasure from any union or confederacy into which it might have entered. But logic or no logic, law or no law, sovereignty or subjection, it was certain that while war was on the Richmond government would never permit North Carolina to withdraw from the Confederacy and become again one

of the United States. The geographical position of North Carolina was such that Confederate consent to such a program would have been Confederate suicide. Nevertheless, and in face of the certainty of Confederate warfare, the candidate who advocated this course received 20,000 votes against his adversary's 54,000.

In Georgia the discontent took a form even more dangerous to Confederate interests. The Governor of that state, Joseph E. Brown, was almost in open rebellion against the Richmond government. On the tenth of September he recalled and furloughed all the Georgia militia that had been serving under Johnston and afterwards under Hood, thus seriously weakening Hood's already inferior force at a time when it stood in peculiar need of strengthening. He still further claimed for his state the right to recall from the Confederate armies everywhere all the Georgia troops that were enlisted in that service. With the scarcely disguised purpose of thus taking Georgia out of the Confederacy and making a separate peace for that state, he issued a summons for the legislature to meet almost immediately.

Further than this, Georgia's most famous statesman and by all odds that state's most influential citizen was Alexander H. Stephens. Mr. Stephens had opposed secession to the bitter end and his selection to be Vice-President of the Confederacy had clearly been dictated by the desire of the politicians to placate him and the multitude of strong Union men who looked to him for leadership. Mr. Stephens had at no time during the war been on terms of intimacy with

Mr. Davis. Mr. Davis could not distrust the integrity of such a man, but he always distrusted his sympathy with the plans and purposes of the Richmond Government, and when the grave discontent arose in Georgia, he attributed it largely to the influence of Mr. Stephens's sentiments. For these were everywhere known.

Mr. Stephens believed firmly in the constitutional right of secession, but, in common with many others, and especially in common with the Virginians, he had from the first held that secession was uncalled for by anything that Mr. Lincoln's election in 1860 implied or threatened. He had insisted upon love for the Union as stoutly as Alexander Hamilton himself—for whom Mr. Stephens was named—could have done. Believing as he did firmly in the right of a state to secede and in the paramount obligation of every citizen to yield allegiance to his state, Mr. Stephens accepted Georgia's secession without in the least approving it.

In the autumn of 1864 he was convinced, as many other thinking men at the South were, that the military problems of the war had been in effect decided; that there was absolutely no further ground for hope of Southern success, and that further continuance of the war could mean nothing else than a needless sacrifice of life and of the substance of the people. He made no concealment of these views and the number of Southern men who shared them grew daily greater.

These men felt that in view of the inevitableness of Confederate failure in the end, it was the duty of the Richmond government to seek terms while yet it

had something to offer in exchange for terms. Mr. Lincoln's supreme desire, it was well known, was to secure the restoration of the Union. He had often, emphatically, and very eloquently, proclaimed that as the sole purpose of his mind and heart, and had declared insistently his readiness and eagerness to sacrifice all other considerations for the sake of that one object. His influence at the North was so clearly all dominating that there could be no doubt of the ready acceptance by Congress and the people, of any arrangement he might make with the seceding states for their restoration to the Union. Mr. Stephens and those who agreed with him in mind, held that now was the time to recognize facts and take the utmost possible advantage of conditions as they existed. Mr. Lincoln was anxious well nigh to the verge of sacrifice, to crown his lifework by the restoration of the Union, and "the people said 'Amen.'"

While the Southern cause was obviously hopeless of ultimate success the South still had veteran armies in the field, under command of generals who perfectly knew how to use them destructively. It was manifest that if the war were to continue, these armies would inflict vast slaughter—as in the event they did—upon the Federal forces, and enormously increase the already stupendous cost of the war to the North. In brief it was certain that if negotiations should be undertaken then the South could secure better terms than would be granted if the struggle should be prolonged until the South could fight no more. So long as Lee's army was intact—however surely its ultimate destruction could be counted upon—its very existence,

and its matchless fighting capacity, must offer to the Washington government a very strong inducement to give lenient terms for the sake of ending the war without the further effusion of blood and the further expenditure of treasure.

In commercial parlance the South at that time had something to trade on—something with which to buy favorable terms of peace; a little later, as these wise men foresaw, she would have nothing and must accept whatever terms her triumphant adversary might see fit to impose.

This condition of things was revealed to General Sherman about the time of his occupation of Atlanta, and he eagerly sought to take such advantage of it as might lead to a prompt ending of the war by the political disintegration of the Confederacy. About that time two men of prominence in Georgia sought permission to enter the Federal lines under safe conduct in order to secure and take home the body of a Confederate officer who had been killed in battle. Both of these men were influential and one of them had been a member of Congress before the war. Sherman not only granted their request but received and entertained them at his headquarters. Having got some inkling of Governor Brown's attitude and state of mind, Sherman seized the opportunity to send messages to that revolting state executive. He intimated to him a purpose presently to march over a great part of the state, and declared that if Governor Brown would withdraw Georgia's quota of troops from the Confederate army, he, Sherman, would confine his men on march to the high

roads and pay for all supplies taken from the country. Otherwise, it was plainly suggested, his march would be a desolating one.

The negotiations came to no practical result. The march was made, and the desolation of it was well-nigh unmatched in the world's annals. But the historical fact that such a negotiation was carried on between a Federal commanding general and the governor of a Confederate state, with distinguished and influential citizens of that state for go-betweens, is interesting in itself and still more interesting as an illustration of the condition into which the events of the great struggle had brought the Southern mind.

About this time President Jefferson Davis of the Confederacy visited the South and made speeches there not only to the people but to the men of Hood's army. In these speeches he bitterly assailed not only Governor Brown but also General Joseph E. Johnston, plainly suggesting that he regarded both as scarcely better than traitors to the Southern cause. Governor Brown's attitude and action in withdrawing the Georgia militia from Hood's army, in negotiating with Sherman and in summoning the legislature with the scarcely disguised purpose of recalling all Georgia troops from the Confederate armies at the time of their sorest need, legitimately bore such construction, perhaps. But General Johnston's only offense was his inability, with a vastly inferior army, to overcome Sherman and prevent his advance toward Atlanta. Johnston's fighting retreat is very differently judged by all historians and all military critics. General Sherman himself, to the end of his life, al-

ways spoke of it as one of the most masterly operations of the war, and no impartial mind can come to any other conclusion after studying the conditions and considering the factors of the problem.

But Mr. Davis's animosity toward Johnston was of long standing and it was implacable. History will scarcely reckon Johnston among the great commanders, but it will always account him a very capable one. Certainly it will reckon his retirement toward Atlanta in presence of Sherman's vastly superior and most capably commanded force, as an enforced retreat conducted with all the skill that any military genius could have brought to bear upon it, and so conducted as to inflict the maximum of injury upon the enemy, while suffering the minimum of hurt in return.

The simple fact, as history sees it clearly, is that Johnston's force was utterly inadequate to check Sherman's advance. He did the best he could and far better than most commanders in like circumstances could have done. He made Sherman's advance as costly and as slow as it was possible for any general with so inferior a force to make it.

But he had not destroyed Sherman's army or prevented its approach to Atlanta. He had not been able to make one man equal to three, and Mr. Davis bitterly resented his incapacity to work these wonders. Mr. Davis had removed Johnston from command and had put Hood in his place. So he told the Confederate soldiers, in his speeches, that a new era was dawning, and explained to them Hood's plan of campaign, which, insane as it was, appealed to their imaginations and fired them with an enthusiasm which

meant enormous slaughter in the operations presently to be undertaken by the madman who had replaced a wise and discreet general in command of the Confederate army before Atlanta.

A more important fact is that Davis's speeches, outlining the plan of campaign, were published in the Southern newspapers, copies of which came to Sherman every day. Thus the Federal general learned in advance precisely what his adversary intended to do or to attempt, and was forearmed by the forewarning.

Hood's plan thus revealed to Sherman was to operate toward the north, destroying the Federal general's communication with Chattanooga, and then advancing against the strongholds of Chattanooga and Nashville.

It is doubtful that an insaner plan of campaign than this was ever devised by any man in command of a great army. It left Sherman free to work his will in Georgia. It withdrew practically all resistance from his front, while the threat to his rear which it implied was scarcely worthy of consideration. For with Thomas at Nashville and adequate forces at Chattanooga and elsewhere it was as certain as anything in war can be, that Hood could accomplish nothing in his northward march except his own destruction.

About the beginning of October Hood cut loose from his communications, abandoning every trustworthy and secure source of supply and, leaving his enemy in overwhelming force in his rear, moved northward. It was easy for him to break the railroad line by which Sherman had received supplies, but

Sherman had already brought vast stores of food and ammunition to Atlanta and was for the time being quite independent of his communications. He promptly pushed a column out in pursuit of Hood and by signals called General Corse from the northward to the support of a small force that was holding Allatoona. There a sharp fight occurred, ending in a check to the Confederates. General Corse had an ear shot off and a cheek bone carried away by a bullet, but, treating his wounds lightly, he telegraphed to Sherman, "I am short a cheek bone and an ear, but am able to whip all hell yet."

Hood did great damage to the railroad and then continued his march northward. After following him for a while Sherman decided to leave Thomas to take care of him, and himself to begin the march to the sea.

Thomas was amply able to meet and defeat any effort that Hood might make, as the event proved, and Sherman, with no adversary south of him, was free to carry out his purpose of marching through the Confederacy, again splitting it into halves and demonstrating his theory, that all that remained of it was "an empty eggshell which only needs to be punctured." He decided at once to puncture it.

CHAPTER LVI

Sherman's "March to the Sea"

Upon reaching this decision, which had the approval both of General Grant and of the War Department, Sherman's first thought was to equip Thomas for the task of dealing successfully with Hood. He detached strong army corps from his own force and sent them to Thomas's reinforcement. He ordered the prompt abandonment of all unimportant posts held in Missouri, Kentucky, Tennessee, Georgia and Alabama, sending their garrisons to Nashville or Chattanooga, still further to strengthen his lieutenant for independent resistance. He asked Grant to send to Thomas also all the recruits that had been gathering at various points in Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Kentucky and Tennessee. In these ways he secured for Thomas a total force much stronger than Hood's, and knowing Thomas's capacity he felt himself entirely justified in leaving the defense of the Tennessee strongholds to that general with orders to follow Hood whithersoever he should go and in the end destroy him.

Then Sherman completed the work of destruction which Hood had begun upon the railway line between Atlanta and Chattanooga. By way of stripping himself for action he sent to the North every sick man, every wounded man and every other man in his army

whom he deemed less than perfectly fit for the arduous work now to be undertaken and when that was done he utterly destroyed all that remained of the railroad.

He stripped his army of all baggage that could in any wise be dispensed with, but organized perhaps the greatest wagon train that any army had ever carried with it, for the transportation of food supplies and ammunition. His was now an army without a base and without communications. It was his purpose to subsist his men upon such supplies as he could take from the country through which he intended to march, but for the sake of perfect security he planned to carry fully ten days' rations with him at all times, or quite enough to feed his army on short rations for three or four weeks in the event of necessity.

Now that Hood had gone northward, Sherman knew that he had no enemy in his pathway except an insignificant cavalry force, and that he might march whithersoever he pleased without fear of serious molestation or opposition. With ten days' full rations in his wagon train and with the country to live upon there was simply no possibility of harm coming to him or his army.

He hoped that one or other of the expeditions planned by Grant against the southern Atlantic coast might reduce the defenses of Savannah and capture that city before his arrival there. If not, he had force enough to take the town himself, or, failing that, to capture Charleston or Mobile or Wilmington, in any case establishing a new base for himself on the sea.

Many years later, at the Authors Club in New York, in the presence of the writer of these volumes, some one mentioned this operation to General Sherman, speaking of it as "The March to the Sea." Thereupon General Sherman turned to the writer and said—as nearly as a good memory can report—

Just see how poets glorify things! That march was nothing more than a change of base,—an operation perfectly familiar to every educated soldier. But a poet got hold of it, nicknamed it "Sherman's March to the Sea," and gave it a totally new significance to the popular mind. Let me explain. At Atlanta I was in the midst of the enemy's country. My nearest base of supplies was Chattanooga—a hundred miles away. That place was itself liable to siege, and it lay the width of two states away from my real and ultimate source of supplies on the Ohio. The enemy might cut it off at any time and even if he failed to do that, I could not defend the hundred miles of single track railroad that connected it with Atlanta. At Atlanta my army was in the air. Its communications were likely to be cut at any moment. Obviously, I must either retire northward from that place, or I must move southward in search of a new base of supplies. As there was no force south of me capable of resisting my advance in that direction, I decided to march toward the south, thus securing a new base for my self within easy sea communication with sources of supply at the north, and at the same time cutting the Confederacy in two again and, more important still, demonstrating the nearly complete collapse of the Confederate power of resistance. So I decided to make the march and change my base. That is all there was of it. But the poet got hold of it—and so instead of a "military change of base," it has become the "March to the Sea."[1]

[1] This report of General Sherman's words was written out while memory was fresh, submitted to General Sherman and approved by him as correct.—Author.

Sherman's first plan with respect to Atlanta had been to make a great military fortress of the place. To that end, as we already know, he had issued his decree of depopulation. Now that he had decided to abandon the town he destroyed it by fire.

His plan of march through Georgia was to move in four columns upon parallel roads, throwing out foragers in every direction to seize upon every ounce of food supplies that still remained in the country, to burn all mills, to capture all live stock, to seize upon all grain and to strip the region bare even of poultry and vegetables. It was to cut a swath of utter desolation through Georgia—a swath sixty miles wide and nearly three hundred miles long—in every square mile of which he should "make a solitude and call it peace."

The desolating march began on the fifteenth of November, Atlanta being left in ashes and smoldering ruins. Under Sherman's marching orders, houses were not to be entered by the soldiers—but those orders were freely disregarded. Only corps commanders were privileged to burn mills, cotton gins and the like; but there were matches in every pocket and they were used with little if any respect for orders which nobody regarded seriously as commands intended to be obeyed. The orders included a provision that wherever the inhabitants should "manifest local hostility, army commanders should order and enforce a devastation more or less relentless according to the measure of such hostility."

Under such orders the progress of the army was marked at every step by devastation and desolation.

General Sherman always contended that he did not intend it to be so, but to a victorious and practically unopposed army, moving through an enemy's country, such orders as those that General Sherman issued could not be expected to result in anything less than the utmost possible destruction. In express terms, his orders authorized the cavalry and artillery to "appropriate freely and without limit," the "horses, mules, wagons, etc., belonging to the inhabitants," and soldiers were authorized to "gather turnips, potatoes, and other vegetables and to drive in stock in sight of their camp." It was suggested in the orders that "in all foraging the parties engaged will endeavor to leave with each family a reasonable portion for their maintenance." But as to what constituted such "reasonable portion" of the property of noncombatants thus to be plundered of their substance, every foraging party was left to be sole judge. No instructions were given for the enforcement of this saving clause of the orders by any authority and in fact it was never enforced.

Sherman's army, moving in four columns over a track sixty miles wide, simply seized upon everything that it found, destroying what it could not use, and there followed it a corps of utterly irresponsible camp followers—plain, simple thieves and robbers—who completed the devastation by taking or wantonly destroying whatever the foraging parties had overlooked or spared.

The hideousness of war was never better illustrated than in Sherman's march to the sea. Its wantonness was never more conspicuously shown forth, than in

a military operation which had absolutely nothing of glory in it, inasmuch as it involved no battle, no possible risk of encounter with any force, and no enterprise more daring than raids upon barnyards and turnip patches. An army of more than sixty-two thousand men and sixty-five guns, perfectly equipped and utterly unopposed by any force that could even pretend to give battle to it, moved over a space of nearly three hundred miles, making war only upon non-combatants and leaving a blackened path of desolation behind. It fought no battles—for the reason that there was no army anywhere to fight. It engaged in no strategy—for the reason that there was no enemy to maneuver against. It encountered no more risk than does a picnic excursion in time of profound peace. Yet at every foot of its progress it wrought such havoc among a helpless people as even grim-visaged war might well blush to own.

It was entirely proper that General Sherman should march his army to the sea by way of changing its base and demonstrating the incapacity of the Confederate country for further resistance. It was entirely proper that on such a march he should draw upon the country for the means of subsisting his army. But all this might have been done by a man of Sherman's commanding ability, armed with such resources as he had under his hand without inflicting anything of hardship upon the helpless people whose homes he rendered desolate and from whose mouths he snatched away the little that was left to them of food.

After an exceedingly slow march of nearly thirty

days, Sherman's army in perfect condition reached the defenses of Savannah on the thirteenth of December. Easily sweeping over Fort McAllister Sherman established communication with the blockading fleet and the "March to the Sea" was finished. On the morning of the twenty-first his troops marched into Savannah, which the Confederates had evacuated.

CHAPTER LVII

Hood's Campaign

In the meanwhile Hood had moved northward from in front of Atlanta. His hope had been to draw Sherman in pursuit and induce him to leave the Confederate city. When Sherman shunned the bait and stayed in Atlanta arranging for his march to the sea, Hood set out to assail Thomas at Chattanooga.

It was an absurdly impracticable campaign, which could not possibly result in anything of advantage to the Confederates except the incidental slaughter of a good many thousands of Federal soldiers with no consequent improvement of Confederate prospects.

Hood had with him about 40,000 men, or nearly that. They were as good men as any in the South, and their organization and discipline were perfect. But they were led upon a wild-goose chase by an incapable commander whose leadership gave them opportunities of heroism, indeed, but doomed them on the other hand to hopeless enterprise and wholly profitless slaughter.

Hood first met his enemy under Schofield, at Duck river, forty miles or so south of Nashville. He quickly and easily flanked the position and compelled Schofield to retreat to Franklin, eighteen miles south of Nashville. There, during the afternoon of No-

vember thirtieth, Hood delivered a tremendous assault. He carried the front line easily and rushed onward to assail the second. Again he succeeded in a struggle that extended itself far into the night.

At midnight Schofield was driven from his works and retreated to Nashville. Thither Hood followed him with that impetuosity that characterized the indiscretion of the new Confederate commander.

Then followed a long pause—Hood could not in any wise tempt Thomas into field battle and Thomas was too strongly entrenched for even Hood, with all his daring indiscretion, to attack him in his works.

It was not until the fifteenth of December that Thomas struck. When he did so it was with tremendous force and determination. He crushed Hood's entrenched left flank and forced him back to a new line of entrenchments in the rear.

On the next day Thomas renewed the attack with his entire army, and succeeded in completely destroying Hood's resisting power and driving his force into broken and disastrous retreat. Thus ended Hood's ill-judged but audacious campaign.

In the meanwhile Sherman had reached Savannah and his plan of campaign was completely successful at both its ends. The Confederacy was again split in two, and there remained in the gulf states no Confederate army capable of offering anything like effective resistance to any operations that Federal armies might have undertaken. Had he been so minded Thomas might have launched a column against Mobile or Wilmington or Charleston with the practical certainty that it would nowhere encounter an opposition which it need seriously consider.

All that now remained of Confederate strength lay in Lee's little army around Petersburg and Richmond, and in such fragments of armies as General Joseph E. Johnston was presently to gather together with the retreating garrison of Savannah and what remained of Hood's army as a nucleus.

The time was drawing near when Grant was to deliver his final blow and at last make an end of the war.

CHAPTER LVIII

Preparations for the Decisive Blow

The situation of the Confederates was now desperate in the extreme. During January an expedition ordered by Grant captured Fort Fisher, at the mouth of Cape Fear river, and made itself master of Wilmington, North Carolina. New Orleans had long ago fallen, Mobile had been completely closed by Farragut's Bay fight and Sherman had secured possession of Savannah. Charleston was the only Southern port still in possession of the Confederates, and Sherman was already threatening that from the rear in such fashion as to render it useless as an avenue of supplies.

The county west of the Mississippi was completely cut off. Georgia had been desolated and all the railroads that might otherwise have carried supplies from Alabama and Mississippi to Lee's army were destroyed. Tennessee, Kentucky, Missouri, Arkansas and Louisiana were in possession of Federal troops. Sheridan had reduced the Valley of Virginia to the condition of a desert, while Grant's forces at Petersburg held the Weldon railroad and were rapidly pushing their works toward the South Side railroad which connected Petersburg with Lynchburg. They were also threatening the Richmond and Danville railroad—Lee's last line of communication southward.

In the meanwhile Sherman was preparing to move northward from Savannah, opposed only by Johnston's army of fragments, and to form a junction with Grant.

Obviously the end was drawing near. Obviously it was the duty of the Confederate Government to make the best terms it could for the ending of the war. It still had Lee's army, and that army was even yet a force to be reckoned with by its adversary. It could still offer to the enemy a choice between the granting of favorable terms of peace on the one hand and the endurance of such further slaughter as Lee's army could inflict on the other. The Confederacy still had in its hands a fighting capacity that might serve as legal tender in the purchase of peace conditions. It was perfectly well known that Mr. Lincoln and indeed the whole North were eager to end the war upon any reasonable terms that might secure the restoration of the Union without a further effusion of blood or a further expenditure of the nation's substance.

It was absolutely certain now that the Confederacy could never win its independence. It was absolutely certain that every day's further fighting must reduce that resisting capacity upon which alone the Southern people could rely as a means of securing terms other than those of unconditional surrender.

In view of these obvious conditions an effort was made in February, 1865, to bring about a peace. A Confederate Commission, with Alexander H. Stephens, Vice-President of the Confederacy, at its head, met Mr. Lincoln and others on board ship in Hampton Roads to discuss the question of ending the

war. Mr. Lincoln and his advisers were eager to stop the conflict without further bloodshed. They demanded only the restoration of the Union and the abolition of slavery in accordance with the terms of the emancipation proclamation. All else they were willing to concede. They were ready to admit all the seceding states to the Union again upon equal terms; to grant universal amnesty; to recognize all the state governments; to set free all military prisoners; to give up all property held in capture; and to negotiate for money compensation in every case in which hardship should appear to have been inflicted upon individuals.

In brief Mr. Lincoln's supreme desire to end the war in a complete restoration of Union, and to reestablish fellowship and good will among the states was so dominant that the South might at that time have made any terms it pleased, short of a dissolution of the Union, or the reëstablishment of slavery.

Mr. Jefferson Davis decreed otherwise. Perfectly knowing that the Confederate capacity of resistance was nearing its end, and perfectly knowing that the restoration of the Union was with Mr. Lincoln a *sine qua non* of all negotiations, he deliberately and emphatically instructed the Confederate Commissioners not even to discuss that proposal. He thus practically forbade all negotiations for peace. With the Confederacy manifestly conquered Mr. Davis insisted that its commissioners should adopt the attitude of conquerors, dictating terms of peace to a vanquished enemy.

The result was foredoomed, of course. Speaking

of the affair years afterwards Mr. Stephens pithily said:

"Mr. Davis carefully spiked all our guns and then ordered us to the front."

It was about this time that Lee visited Mr. Davis and explained the situation to him. He set forth the fact that Grant, with his enormously superior force, could indefinitely extend his lines to the left, thus compelling the Confederate commander to stretch out his own lines to nothingness; that Grant could, and surely would, concentrate an overwhelming force at some point and there irresistibly break through the Confederate lines of defenses; and that when this should be done, successful retreat would be impossible to the Confederate army.

There is good historical ground for the belief that General Lee at that time proposed an alternative course of action. He asked Mr. Davis to give him the negroes of the South as soldiers; to permit him to put them into the defensive works, and thus set his veterans free to make a last desperately determined invasion of the North; or, if the negroes were denied to him, that he should be permitted to abandon the defense of Richmond and Petersburg, while retreat was yet possible, retire to the line of the Roanoke river, form a junction with such other forces as the Confederacy still had at command and make a final stand in the far interior against Grant

It is credibly reported that Mr. Davis resolutely refused to permit General Lee to carry out either of these alternative plans; that he refused to permit the enlistment of negroes and at the same time forbade

General Lee to withdraw his army from the defense of Richmond and Petersburg.

There was left to the great Confederate commander only the duty of returning to his headquarters, resisting while resistance was possible, and accepting the inevitable end whenever the advance of spring and the consequent hardening of the roads should open the way for Grant to bring that end about by a decisive movement.

The time was not yet ripe for the delivery of the final blow. Mud still stood in the way; but while awaiting his opportunity Grant continued those operations in other quarters which effectually prevented Lee's reinforcement and contributed in important ways to the accomplishment of his ultimate purpose. He kept Canby pounding at Mobile. He drew from Thomas in Tennessee strong reinforcements for the Army of the Potomac. In February he directed Sheridan to move up the Valley of Virginia in irresistible force, brush the remnant of Early's army out of existence, destroy the locks of the James river and Kanawha canal, cut the railroad communications and then sweep like a hurricane eastward to join the main army before Petersburg and Richmond. At the same time he ordered a column to move from Chattanooga eastward toward Lynchburg, destroying the railroad as it marched and thus additionally hemming Lee in and crippling him.

In the meanwhile his own pounding on Lee's lines was ceaseless. The object of this was to occupy all of Lee's attention and prevent him from detaching troops for operations in any direction.

Grant's lines now extended from a point north of Richmond, eastward, southward and westward to positions south and west of Petersburg, and at every opportunity he was pushing his left wing farther around Lee's flank, with the double purpose of still further weakening the Confederates by attenuation and rendering impossible the successful retreat of the Army of Northern Virginia when the time should come to concentrate an overwhelming Federal force against some point in it and break through.

To meet this strategy General Lee undertook a bold operation on the twenty-fourth of March which was brilliantly, but in the end unsuccessfully, executed by General Gordon. His plan was by an attack upon the Federal left wing to compel Grant for a time to contract his lines on the left and thus to secure to the Confederates a way out of the net in which they had been enmeshed. The attack was made in the night, a fact which would have rendered it perilous in the extreme had the troops that made it been other than war-worn veterans. At the point selected for assault the Federal and Confederate lines lay within one hundred yards of each other, and both were strongly fortified. By an adroit movement the Confederates captured the whole body of Federal pickets and sent them as prisoners to the rear, thus reducing the distance between themselves and the earthworks to be assaulted to less than fifty yards. Then with a rush they hurled themselves upon the Federal works and carried them. For a time it seemed likely that they would crumple up the whole of Grant's left wing and compel the contraction of his lines by several miles.

But General Parke, who commanded the Federal forces in that quarter, made hurried dispositions to check the Confederate assault, and after some hours of hard fighting, in which the Confederates lost 4,000 men and the Federals 2,000, the Federal lines were reëstablished.

All this occurred just before Grant's final and decisive blow was delivered. Earlier in the war this conflict would have been everywhere heralded as a great battle. In the spring of 1865—so used had the country become to such things—it was a scarcely noticed incident in the siege operations about Petersburg.

CHAPTER LIX

The End

While all this was going on around Petersburg, Sherman, under Grant's instructions, was carrying out the other part of the lieutenant general's program. After securing possession of Savannah he pushed troops forward to Pocotaligo, a point on the Charleston and Savannah railroad about midway between the two cities. From that position he could move with equal ease against Charleston, Augusta, or Columbia and the cities and towns north of Columbia.

General Joseph E. Johnston had been grudgingly recalled to the command of such Confederate forces as could be assembled in that quarter for the purpose of offering resistance to that advance northwardly which Sherman obviously intended. But for a time Johnston could not know or safely conjecture by which of the three lines of march that were equally open to him, Sherman would elect to move. Consequently for a time Johnston was compelled to scatter his meager forces widely, holding them in such readiness as he could for concentration when his enemy's purposes should be disclosed.

On the first of February Sherman began his march. Carefully spreading reports that Charleston on the one hand or Augusta on the other was his destination,

he moved swiftly upon Columbia, the capital city of South Carolina.

It was Sherman's plan in this northward march to keep the sea always at his back. He arranged for the fleet to coöperate with him from beginning to end, to bring supplies to the several points along the coast that were held by the Federals and to preserve to him at those points secure places of refuge to which he might retreat in the event of his encountering disaster in the field. His tactics were precisely those adopted by Cornwallis in his contest with Greene in 1780, but with the modern improvement of a navy driven by steam and therefore far more certain and precise in its operations than that which supported Cornwallis could be.

Sherman entered the city of Columbia on the seventeenth of February. Thus far he had encountered no opposition except such as the alert Confederate cavalry under Wade Hampton could offer. For as yet the uncertainty as to whither Sherman planned to go compelled Johnston to keep his own forces scattered over a line that stretched all the way from Augusta to Charleston.

It was in South Carolina, of which Columbia is the capital, that secession had been born. It was here that South Carolina had proclaimed her withdrawal from the Union and her independent sovereignty. It was here that the war which had cost so much of life and treasure and sacrifice and suffering had been born. There was very naturally, among the now victorious men of Sherman's command, a specially vengeful feeling toward South Carolina and still more against its capital city.

The cotton stored in that city was brought out and piled in the middle of the broad streets. Presently it was fired by some agency. The fire spread to the buildings of the town, and the greater part of the beautiful city was burned.

The Confederates have always insisted that Columbia was wantonly burned by General Sherman's order. General Sherman always denied the charge. The controversy over that point in newspapers, pamphlets and books, has filled space enough in print to constitute a library.

It would quite uselessly encumber these pages to present here, even in outline, the hopelessly conflicting testimony that has been given on either side. All of that testimony is accessible to every reader who cares to follow it in controversial publications, and it seems to lead to no safely definite conclusion.

Let us leave the matter here as one of the calamities of war concerning which the responsibility is so hopelessly involved in a mass of conflicting testimony that no historian mindful of fairness can feel himself safe in passing judgment with respect to it. Columbia has been rebuilt in all its beauty. The country in whose crown it is a jewel has grown to be the greatest and freest on earth. Surely we can leave the dead past to bury its dead, so far as such matters as this are concerned.

From Columbia northward Sherman's advance was contested at every step with all the vigor and determination that General Joseph E. Johnston could bring to bear. That able general was a grand master of the art of so retreating as to make his retreat more

costly to his enemy than an advance would have been. His force was exceedingly small as compared with Sherman's columns, but it was made up of veteran troops, as good as ever stood up before an enemy, and it was perfectly responsive to any and every demand that its commanding general might make upon it either for daring or for endurance.

The country through which Sherman had to march was swampy, forest grown, and laced with water-courses difficult to pass. Its roads were mere tracks through woods and fields, which, when rain fell, quickly became quagmires. At every stream Johnston's ceaselessly active men burned the bridges and obstructed the fords. In every forest stretch they felled trees across the roads, and planting cannon in commanding positions, rendered the progress of their foes as dangerous as it was difficult. Wherever a vantage ground lay, the Confederates—war-educated as they were, and still determined—took position and inch by inch contested the difficult ground. Not in all the war was there an operation more gallant on either side than this advance and retreat.

Still keeping the protecting sea on his right flank which he could at any moment change into his rear, Sherman left the ashes of Columbia on the twentieth of February and advanced towards Fayetteville, where he arrived on the eleventh of March.

In the meanwhile the city of Wilmington, on the coast, had been captured by General Terry's Fort Fisher expedition, and communication was established between Terry and Sherman. Thus a way was opened by which both supplies and reinforcements might be

sent without limit or molestation to the army that was for the third time cutting in twain what remained of the Confederacy.

From Fayetteville, Sherman pushed on to Goldsboro fighting with Johnston's desperate Confederates at every step. Thence he advanced toward Raleigh, the capital city of North Carolina.

At Averysboro, a point between, the two armies came into direct collision on the sixteenth of March and each lost about half a thousand men in a severe conflict. Three days later on the nineteenth they met again at Bentonville and in a small, but bloody conflict, the Federals lost 1,600 men and the Confederates somewhat more than 2,000.

In the meanwhile, at Goldsboro, Sherman had been reinforced by the whole of Schofield's corps, withdrawn from Thomas's force at Nashville. This addition to his force rendered his army almost ridiculously superior in numbers to that of his adversary. That, under Grant's direction, was always the keynote of tactics and strategy. From beginning to end of his campaigns Grant held to the doctrine of "the most men." Seeing clearly that the North could put three or four men into the field to the South's one, he regarded it as very clearly his duty, as the commander in chief of the Federal forces, to see to it that wherever a fight was to occur, the three or four should be present to meet and overcome the one.

The fierce struggle at Bentonville which for a time seemed of very doubtful issue, was the last battle of consequence fought between Sherman and Johnston.

Let us go back now to Petersburg, where the hour

of the final struggle drew near. The reader has already been told of Lee's effort to compel Grant to contract his lines south and west of Petersburg. That effort was made on the night of the twenty-fourth of March and the morning of the twenty-fifth.

The spring was advancing now. The roads were hardening. Grant had all the force that he could use and more. His army vastly outnumbered the remnant of Lee's. His equipment was as perfect as good organization and a lavish expenditure of money could make it. With an unseen railroad skirting his rear and a fleet at his base he could concentrate as heavy a force as he pleased at any point he might select on Lee's line. Moreover the extension of the Federal line to the left had placed the two armies in such position that if Grant could crush or break through Lee's right wing, Richmond would be completely cut off, and the successful retreat of Lee's army would be impossible.

It was Grant's plan to do precisely this. To that end he sent three strong divisions under General Ord to strengthen his extreme left, where General Sheridan commanded. Then he ordered Sheridan to push forward through Dinwiddie Court House to Five Forks and assail the enemy there.

Battle was joined on the thirty-first of March, but so great was the resisting power of the sadly depleted Confederate army, that Sheridan was hurled back and compelled to appeal to Grant for help. On the first of April, strongly reinforced, Sheridan again advanced to the attack, and after a bloody contest succeeded in carrying the position, taking about 5,000

prisoners, the very flower of the Confederate troops.

The work of ending the war was now on, and Grant prosecuted it vigorously. At daybreak on April the second he assaulted the center of Lee's line near Petersburg, broke through it at two points, and by pressing Lee hard on his right made a practical end of Confederate resistance in that quarter.

There was nothing left to Lee but to abandon Richmond and Petersburg and go into a retreat which was sure to be marked at every step by fierce fighting, but which was clearly hopeless from its beginning. His only chance was to fall back through Virginia, place himself behind the Roanoke river, form a junction there with Johnston's army and make one last, desperate stand against armies overwhelmingly superior to his own in all except courage and dogged determination. That chance was so slender, by reason of the situation, that only a high heroism would have regarded it even as a possibility.

Under Lee's instruction Richmond was evacuated. In the process some fool poured all the alcoholic liquor there was in the town into the gutters, at a time when the arsenals and public warehouses were being fired. The fire, of course, quickly set the rivers of whiskey aflame and from these the houses were ignited, so that within a brief while the entire heart of the city was burned.

Lee's only hope in retreat lay in marching southwestwardly. But Grant's forces under Sheridan had the advantage of him at the start and their activity was such as to keep them constantly not only upon the left flank of the retreating forces, but also in

front of them at many points. From beginning to end of the retreat Grant hammered Lee's southern flank, turned and assailed his front, and continuously pressed him back toward James river on the north. That way there lay no thoroughfare for the Confederates. They must force their way to the southwest or they must surrender for lack of food. They simply could not force their way to the southwest, and so their surrender was inevitable from the very first hour of the retreat.

Moreover Lee's force, already depleted to a mere handful, was hourly losing strength in many ways. The constant fighting was depleting it. Starvation—not figurative but actual—was compelling many of the men to wander away from the line of march in search of food. Many filled their bellies with grass or leaves and marched on, determined to hold out to the end. Here and there one got possession of an ear of hard corn and accepted it as a three days' ration. Pasture fields in which wild onions had sprung up in response to the spring sunshine, were despoiled of their fruitage by famishing men. The bursting buds of forest trees were greedily eaten. Even haystacks—when they were infrequently found—were devoured as human food for lack of anything better.

All these things and others like unto them, were done by the steadily diminishing company of Confederates who were determined to hold out to the end even if the end should prove to be death by starvation. But hour by hour that small company of heroic souls was growing smaller and smaller. Many died by the roadside. Many were killed while delivering their

own despairing fire. Many, seeing that further resistance was hopeless, and knowing how terribly their wives and children needed them in the homes which a farther march would leave behind, simply went home.

During the last days of his retreat Lee had at no time so many as 20,000 men, all starving, while his adversary was assailing him by day and by night, with a force numbering 150,000, or about eight to one. Surely even the story of the Confederate war presents no spectacle which better illustrates the high quality of American manhood than does this resistance through many days of starvation and discouragement, by a mere handful of men, assailed in flank, in rear and in front by seven or eight times their number of perfectly equipped and well fed men.

At Appomattox Court House Lee found himself completely surrounded. By good marching Grant had succeeded in pushing an infantry column of 80,000 men into Lee's front, in support of Sheridan's cavalry operations there.

There was only one course open to the great Confederate chieftain. He surrendered on the ninth and tenth of April all that remained of the Army of Northern Virginia. They numbered, all told, including teamsters, quartermaster's men and all, only 26,000 men, of whom no more than 7,800 carried muskets.

In effect this surrender made an end of the most stupendous war of modern times. As the army under Lee had been from the beginning the backbone of the Confederate cause, its destruction resulted in the surrender of all the other Confederate forces as

soon as the news of the event at Appomattox could reach the detached commanders.

Here ends the story of the Confederate war. In these pages a conscientious effort has been made to tell it with the utmost impartiality and the most scrupulous regard for truth.

That war began about forty-nine years ago. It is now forty-five years since it ended in the restoration of the American Union. The American people are again completely one, and the great Republic has come to be the most potent as it is the freest nation that has ever existed on earth. The bitternesses and resentments to which the fierce struggle gave birth have been displaced by kindlier thoughts in all but the narrowest and most ungenerous minds. The two great commanders, Lee and Grant, have alike been assigned to honored places in all our Halls of Fame. The time has come when all Americans may fitly rejoice together in the story of the great deeds done on the one side and on the other in that Confederate war which did so much to give to the Republic its foremost place among the nations of the earth.

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